

"I think the city should be tolerant of graffiti, a kind of 'city folk art.' It is a way for people to show their creativity and passion."
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Wudaokou has taken on the real feel of a college town, with cool student-oriented hangouts cropping up all over the place.
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As a child growing up by the side of a railway, Xiao Bian'er always felt curious about the lives of the passengers on the trains.
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BEIJING TODAY

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 3 2004

NO. 170

CN11-0120

HTTP://BJTODAY.YNET.COM



Photos by Li Bo

Environmental Justice at Shangri-La

By Chu Meng

In a small village called Jisha in Shangri-La County, Yunnan Province, a letter of appointment was presented on August 19 on behalf of 88 households to the first legal counselor. The legal counselor, Li Weiyang, is entrusted with helping the villagers in their fight to prevent the further deforestation and exploitation of the natural environment of the Thousand Lakes Mountains.

Shangri-La, a beautiful mountainous region of Yunnan bordering Tibet, was named a World Heritage Site in 2002. The village of Jisha, which falls under the administration of Xiaozhongdian township, lies at the foot of the Qianhu, or Thousand Lake, Mountains. The hills around the village are dotted with over 100 pristine lakes and many, despite extensive logging up to 1998, remain covered by primeval forests. The alpine lakes and several of the mountains are held as sacred by the local Tibetans, and every year, religious ceremonies are held there.

Balancing development and protection

In August 2002, a Kunming real estate company signed a contract with the Xiaozhongdian township government to develop a tourism project in Jisha and the surrounding Qianhu Mountains.

The real estate company subsequently founded the Qianhu Mountains Ecological Exploitation Company, which in August 2004, began seeking to acquire the sole rights for the commercial exploitation of the region, promising in return to pay the village 50,000 yuan (US \$6,000) per year for three years. Seven residents, representing the whole village, signed a contract with the company. All of the signatories are illiterate and did not know that the exploitation rights actually lasted for 40 years. More importantly, they were not chosen to represent the villagers by their peers, but instead were assigned the roles directly by the Xiaozhongdian township government.

Li Bo, a conservationist who



'The appointment of legal consultants for nearly illiterate villagers is one of the key steps of our project.'

works for Center for Biodiversity and Indigenous Knowledge (CBIK) in Kunming, arrived in Shangri-La County in the autumn of 2000, when he joined a community-based agro-biodiversity conservation project sponsored by CBIK in the northwestern part of Yunnan.

The project was jointly initiated by the Yunnan provincial government, the Global Environment Facilities (GEF) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in the same year. It was Li's idea to help the Jisha villagers find a counselor to represent them, and it was he who drafted the appointment contract.

"The villagers were unhappy because they had neither been informed nor consulted. Nor were they included in the development. They were also concerned that the development project and the rubbish left behind by the visitors might spoil their sacred hills and lakes. They started to design and de-

velop an eco-cultural tourism project with our funds. The appointment of legal consultants for nearly illiterate villagers is one of the key steps of our project," Li Bo said in an interview with *Beijing Today* Tuesday.

"Ideally, it will keep the protection of community resources and development of livelihoods in balance," he said, "It is in fact the first contract of this kind signed by isolated villagers such as these who have little understanding of how to protect their environment from damaging commercial activities. The Jisha case is unusual in China, because it is not simply an economic dispute such as we see in big cities; it is a case of making people aware of their community's resource rights and the importance of biodiversity conservation."

Logging in peaceful haven

The area around Jisha village was logged by the state logging company from the mid 60s to mid 90s. The ecological, economic and social impact of the logging was devastating and lasted well beyond 1998 when the national logging ban was implemented.

At the peak of the logging operations, more than 1,000 lumber workers, mainly from Northeast China, were stationed there, cutting down 400,000 cubic meters of timber a year. In a bid to shake off their poverty, the locals joined the logging army in the late 1980s. For nearly twenty years, wages paid to the lumber workers accounted for 50 to 70 percent of villagers' income. As primeval forest was replaced by second growth, local wildlife retreated deeper into the moun-

tains and many of the sacred hills were left totally denuded.

In an effort to preserve the forests and wildlife and prevent further soil erosion and loss of biodiversity, China banned logging in first growth forests and natural woods in 1998. Jisha lies within this protected zone. But as a result, the state logging company left, hills were bald, and around 400 local people lost much of their homeland's natural resources – the pasture land where they fed their yaks and planted crops and pristine forest.

Li Bo said, "After 1998, the Jisha community had to live with the devastating consequences of the logging. I was appalled to learn that the villagers had so little means and control over resources that were so vital to their livelihoods. The mountains not only hold the summer alpine pasture land, which produce two thirds of their dairy products, but are also their most sacred places, and the source of all their drinking and irrigation water."

The fact that the new concession business contract between the company and township government neither took the farmers' concerns into account, nor recognized the farmers as stakeholders, and therefore entitled to share development benefits, speaks volumes about the serious problems in the yet to be defined environmental justices of resources management and nature conservation.

Helping hands

While CBIK worked to get the community-based eco-development project up and running, the Qianhu Mountains Ecological Exploitation Company and the township government stepped up their campaign to get the villagers to agree to their mass tourism development project. However the villagers were not told about or shown any of the development blueprints, because the construction plans were "confidential."

According to Li Bo, the company asked him during the negotiations "why the Jisha villagers should receive benefits from the project! The company planned to construct a cable

car system from the foot of the Qianhu Mountains right to the top, where there are many hills and lakes the villagers hold as sacred. They also wanted to build a modern hotel of the slope of the mountain. The villagers said that as they won't be offered any economic compensation for the loss of their land, they wanted to set up a horse-riding service and act as tour guides for tourists, to make some money. However the company claimed that horse-riding would damage the eco-system. But everybody understands that the horse has been a traditional means of transportation here for thousands of years, and has never endangered the environment. And compared to cable cars, which one will do more harm to the sacred hills and lakes!"

Li realized that clarifying and solving the legal issues for the villagers was critical to the success of CBIK's community environmental protection and development project. First, the villagers believed that the government was law and law was whatever the government said it was; second, they had no idea that some laws might actually work in their favor. The villagers needed someone who could explain to them what the company was going to do with their lands and to help them understand their rights and deserved benefits. Therefore, he helped draft the letter of appointment, which was presented to Li Weiyang from Yunnan Ruixiang Law Firm.

"The day after our first evening law-study class in the village, which dealt with citizen's rights on resources and decision-making, some of the farmers were concerned that they

might have gotten involved in some sort of illegal, anti-government activities. Later, we even had greater difficulty explaining to them what a legal advisor does and how he could potentially benefit them. An old man named Lamu told me that they had never before met anyone who would help them without asking for something in return," Li Weiyang told *Beijing Today* Wednesday.

Li Bo added, "Clearly, we were determined to get them a legal advisor as our first step to engage laws and legal issues as our project to assist them when negotiating with the company and township government. Finally, they came to understand this and accepted our help. The fact is that the destructive exploitation for the past 20 years had profound impact not only on the local environment, but also on the villagers attitude towards outsiders and the local government, and has even soured relationships between the local villagers."

With the assistance of Li Weiyang, CBIK has raised 250,000 yuan (US \$30,488) from a Dutch development institute to finance the project. He told *Beijing Today* Wednesday that the real estate company has agreed to pay environmental compensation to the Jisha villagers up to 250 thousand yuan per year from 2004 to 2008, and from 2009 to 2040, the amount will increase to 400,000 yuan per year. "Though the amount is far less than we hoped for, it represents a big step forward for Jisha," said Li.

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Free Personal Classifieds

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printed free of charge. Email your personal classifieds (in English and Chinese) to info@ynet.com. Personal classifieds should conform to relevant laws and regulations.

Beijing Hong Kong Governments Getting Closer

By Chu Meng

With the aim of furthering governmental cooperation between Beijing and Hong Kong and to establish a more efficient cooperation mechanism, the first conference on Beijing-Hong Kong Economic and Trade Cooperation was held in Hong Kong this Thursday. The conference was one of the key events of the Eighth Beijing-Hong Kong Economic Cooperation Symposium held from September 2 and 3.

Participating in the opening ceremony yesterday was secretary of the CPC Beijing Municipal Committee Liu Qi, mayor of Beijing Wang Qishan, chief executive of Hong Kong Tung Chee-hwa and director of the liaison office of the CPC Government in Hong Kong Gao Siren.

The new governmental cooperation mechanism includes three points: first the conference will be hosted in turn

by top officials from Beijing and Hong Kong; second, supervision work will be led by a vice-major of Beijing and director-general of the Hong Kong Finance Department; third, the two cities will each establish a communication office in order to ensure regular contact between the two sides.

Beijing has brought to the two-day event not only business information for the Olympic economy, but also a total of 110 solid investment projects, among which 17 represent key projects in Beijing's infrastructure establishment and industrial development.

The total planned investment has reached US \$12 billion in projects including the Nos. 4, 5, 9 and 10 subway lines; the northern-line capital airport expressway; and the construction of sewage disposal facility in Changping District.



Top leaders from Beijing and Hong Kong attend the Eighth Beijing Hong Kong Economic Cooperation Symposium and Olympic Economy Market Promotion in Hong Kong Thursday. Hong Kong chief executive Tung Chee-hwa (back row, fifth from right), municipal committee secretary of Beijing Liu Qi (Center), CPPCC National Committee member Fok Ying Tung (third right), Beijing mayor Wang Qishan (second right). Photo by Imaginechina

NPC Passes Amendments on Laws

By Wei Lixin

China's top legislative body, the National People's Congress (NPC), passed two revised laws and 10 amendments to a wide range of laws at the 11th session of the NPC Standing Committee last Saturday.

The two revised laws relate to the prevention and control of contagious diseases, and electronic signatures on business contracts.

According to the revised law on contagious diseases, China will establish a monitoring and early warning

system to identify factors that might contribute to the spread of infectious diseases. The amendment also requires all health departments to establish epidemic reporting systems to keep the public informed on the latest developments of epidemics. The law stipulates that governments at all levels should strengthen prevention and curb the spread of AIDS. This is the first time that AIDS is specifically mentioned in the law.

Under the revised law on electronic signatures on busi-

ness contracts, electronic signatures are given the same legal weight as handwritten signatures and seals in business transactions, that is to say, business contracts signed on-line have equal legal authority to written ones.

The amendment is aimed at removing certain institutional barriers currently inhibiting the development of e-commerce nationwide, and to boost on-line business.

A legal electronic signature should identify the signer and confirm file content. As

Internet trade requires a reliable third party to confirm the identity of the signing parties, the credibility of online certifying organizations is significant for transaction security.

The 10 amendments concern laws on highways, corporations, securities, negotiable instruments, auctions, wildlife protection, fishing, agriculture, degrees and land administration. The most significant amendments are to the securities and corporation laws. According to the amendment to the securities law, the

issue price of above par issue stock will be fixed by negotiations between issuers and the securities agency distributor.

The NPC has also approved a resolution ratifying the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, to protect the safety of its increasingly large number of overseas citizens. The convention, which was formulated by the United Nations and took effect in 1995, has been ratified by 72 countries, including Russia, Britain and France.

New Tax Law Limit Small Foreign Trade Business

By Annie Wei

Individually operated foreign trade companies are facing difficulties as a result of an urgent notice of taxation management on new commercial and trade companies, according to a report in last Saturday's *China Business*.

The notice, titled Major Amendments to the Foreign Trade Law and Their Implications, released by the Ministry of Commerce on April 13, approved foreign trade activities by individuals. Under the previous law, individuals were not allowed to engage in foreign trade business.

However a newly released notice on taxation management of newly opened commercial and trade companies was implemented from August 1. According to the notice, such companies can only apply for general taxpayer qualification if annual sales reach 1.8 million yuan.

Businessman Hou Zheming was quoted in *China Business* as saying that following the publishing of the major amendments, he opened his own foreign trade company without encountering any problems in registration. But the 1.8 million yuan

annual sales requirement in the notice handicapped him with general taxpayer qualification, which means that his company cannot apply for customs refunds, as a result, he is losing 6 to 17 percent value on each deal. Hou also pointed out that most newly established foreign trade companies do not have 1.8 million yuan in annual sales and they cannot survive without refunds.

A spokesman from the Department of Planning and Finance of the Ministry of Commerce, was quoted in *China Business* as saying the that problem is distinct that new and small foreign trade companies cannot apply for customs refunds without general taxpayer qualification. The State Administration of Taxation released the notice as a measure of receipts control, and the Ministry of Commerce has asked the administration to find a solution. There is as yet no word as to whether a further amendment will be released.

Another source from administration quoted in *China Business*, said there will be no changes or amendments for the notice, which was introduced to avoid fraudulently added value tax receipts. A company of a certain size and satisfactory business operation can apply for general taxpayer qualification.

However another businessman in the wooden door export business told *Beijing Today* Wednesday, only a few companies, with products that sell for less abroad than in the domestic market, such as socks and bras, can survive without tax refunds. He considered that such businesses were taking advantage of the policies.

Interest Free Loans for School Students

By Annie Wei

Newly introduced changes to national school-aid loans make the system "basically reasonable," according to Zhang Baoqing, vice-minister of education.

The Education Department, Finance Department, People's Bank of China and the China Banking Regulation Commission held a press conference Tuesday morning, announcing adjustments to the national school-aid loan system. Although imperfections remained, the system was basically reasonable, Zhang was quoted as saying in *Beijing News* Wednesday.

Wu Xiaoling, vice president of China People's Bank said changes affected the interest on student loans, which cover tuition, accommodation and living. Interest on student loans for current students will now be paid entirely by the state, rather than 50 percent by the student and 50 percent by the state. Meanwhile former students will pay full interest, rather than 50 percent.

Previously, students had to start repaying the loan immediately after graduation. Under the new policy, repayment is dependant on

the student's employment status, and can be delayed for up to six years after graduation.

Some students have failed to repay their loans following graduation since student loans were introduced in 1999. In some provinces, the rate of default on student loans was over 20 percent. As a result of this risk, some banks have been unwilling to offer student loans. Under the new system, the government, banks and schools will share the risk. The compensation foundation for universities and institutes will be equally shared with the central finance department, while that of local colleges will be equally shared with the local finance department. This change will help to reduce the banks' risk, while the risk to the schools will be minimal.

Wu Xiaoling was quoted in the *Beijing News* as saying national and provincial loan management centers will be established to enhance collaboration between banks and universities.

Zhao Baoqing meanwhile emphasized that all enrolled students should be able to complete their education and not be forced to drop out of school for financial reasons.

Student loans are available in China to students from families whose income is lower the local average. Zhao said up to 20 percent of China's enrolled qualified for the loans according to this criteria, and 5 to 10 percent faced serious financial troubles.

Environmental Effect Calculated in GDP

By Annie Wei

An experimental framework for calculating green GDP in China has been established according to Pan Yue, vice-director of the State Environmental Protection Administration of China (SEPA).

Speaking at a meeting on China's resources and environmental economy Wednesday, Pan said the pilot system will be implemented as quickly as possible.

The meeting, organized by SEPAC and National Bureau of Statistics, discussed how to set up and operate the system.

According to the official SEPAC website, the administration has organized the accounting on environmental pollution loss from 1998 to 2003, and expects a primary conclusion at the end of this year or in early 2005. Based on the experimental framework, the Green GDP project will begin in Beijing, Jilin, Shangxi, Guangdong and Shanghai.

Renowned Tsinghua University economist Wei Jie, was quoted in *Beijing Morning Post* yesterday as saying that the environmental effect accounted in GDP will not affect GDP growth speed. For example, loss caused by environmental pollution will cause a decline in GDP value, but investment to improve the environment, along with related job opportunities, will boost the GDP value.

Oil Import Licenses Granted to 17 Companies

By Annie Wei

The Ministry of Commerce has confirmed a third list of 17 non-state-owned companies licensed to import crude and refined oil products, according to last Friday's *Beijing Times*.

Hubei Tianfa and Heilongjiang Union Petroleum and Chemicals have been granted licenses to import crude oil. A further 15 companies have received licenses to import refined oil.

Xinjia Yaxin International Trade, Ninxia Lanxing Oil Sales and Dongguan Electricity and Fuel, confirmed to *Beijing Today* Tuesday that they had received licenses to import refined oil. A spokesman for the international trade department of Ninxia Lanxing Oil Sales said the company needs to import 300,000 tons of oil every year.

Analysts said that although quotas for the non-state owned companies might be small, it means that more and more qualified non-state-owned companies can take part in the crude and refined oil trade, a market formerly dominated by China National Petroleum Corporation and China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (Sinopec).

Since China agreed to open its refined oil retail market by the end of this year and the refined oil wholesale market by the end of next year, foreign companies have participated in the management of over 2,000 oil stations by different means. The impact on domestic companies will be lessened by opening the market to non-state-own companies in advance.

Home Appliances to Carry Energy Efficiency Ratings

By Sun Yongjian

From March 1 next year, all new home appliances must be clearly marked with an energy efficiency rating, according to a document issued by the National Development and Reform Commission and the National General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine on August 27.

According to Lu Renbo, vice-president of the Market Economy Research Institute of the Development and Research Center of the State Council, the establishment of an energy efficiency rating system plays a key role in raising consumers' awareness about energy-saving, and will speed up efforts to create an energy-efficient society.

Go-ahead for Foreign Capital in Cartoons and Subscription TV

By Xie Lixue

The curtain came down Monday on the International Exhibition of Broadcasting, Film and Television. During the exhibition, discussions were held on the issues of drawing on foreign capital for cartoons and for subscription programs on TV.

At the Forum of International Cartoons last Wednesday, Hu Zhanfan, vice-director of the administration of broadcasting and television, announced that the domestic cartoon market would partially open to foreign investors. He pointed out that improving the commercial viability of animated films was a essential with the global cartoon industry blooming rapidly in the 21st century. It was the first time that the change in policy has been publicly canvassed. Domestic experts in the field predicted that foreign companies would only be allowed to participate in the post-production process.

At another seminar, held on Friday and Saturday, Tian Jin, a newly appointed vice-director of the administration, spoke about the production of fee-paid TV programs. He said, "The policies to encourage the production of TV series include the improvement on the organization's structure, reducing the limitations and adding some foreign investment, on the condition that the Chinese side holds the majority share. However, foreign companies would still be banned from operating a subscription-channel."

Safety and Health Exhibition and Forum Open

By Zhang Zhan

The Second China International Occupational Safety and Health Exhibition opened Wednesday at Beijing's China World Trade Center. More than 50 foreign companies, including DuPont and 3M and 150 Chinese companies and media organizations are attending the four-day exhibition.

The exhibition is being held in conjunction with the Second China International Forum on Work Safety. The forum, which opened yesterday, focuses on work safety, emergency rescue and risk management, and will be addressed by business leaders, academics and government officials.

The forum and the exhibition are sponsored by SAWS China, Liberty Mutual Insurance, USA and National Safety Council, and organized by the National Center for International Exchange and Cooperation on Work Safety.

Is Diet Coke Drugged?

Former doctor sues over drink's ingredient mix

By Annie Wei

The Coca-Cola Company in Tianjin got in hot water last week, as a former doctor has said its Diet Coke product contains an illegal drug and filed a related lawsuit against the company with the court of the Tianjin Economic And Technology Development Zone on August 25.

The court has yet to start hearing the case, but the domestic media has been widely covering the story.

The plaintiff, a 35-year-old man surnamed Li, said Diet Coke contains both caffeine and sodium benzoate, two substances that combined in certain doses can form a potentially addictive drug considered illegal in China.

Drugs composed of the two compounds are used to treat respiratory conditions.

In his lawsuit, Li is demanding Coca-Cola recall its Diet Coke products from the domestic market, refund the 1.8 yuan he once spent to purchase a can of Diet Coke and offer a symbolic 1 yuan in compensation.

A spokesman for Coca-Cola told the Tianjin-based *City Express* newspaper on August 26 that all its products were produced legally and the company held certificates of safety from the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine and the Tianjin Board of Health. The source said all Coke products went through rigorous annual sample testing at the Tianjin Center For Disease Control And Prevention every year as well as the company's own regular quality and safety checks.

Li started on his anti-Coke crusade in July after he purchased a can of Diet Coke from



Diet Coke contains caffeine and sodium benzoate – but in the correct proportions to qualify as a drug?

Photo by Photocomer

a supermarket and noted the ingredients included water, caffeine and sodium benzoate, he told *Beijing Today*. Though he now works in the flower field, Li had been a doctor for 15 years, and he quickly put together that the drink contained all the basic materials to make the potentially dangerous drug.

Wang Lei, a PR executive for Coca-Cola in Beijing, said Monday that the charges were incorrect, because only mixtures of caffeine and sodium benzoate in equal parts could qualify as the drug, adding that Diet Coke was made in keeping with national food and drink safety regulations.

Company standards hold that

Diet Coke should not include more than 150 milligrams of caffeine and 200 milligrams of sodium benzoate per liter, a composition that puts it within domestic health supervision authorities' requirements.

Li, however, argues that people who drank two or three cans of Diet Coke a day could still be in danger. He also said he had certified test results that showed the Diet Coke he had purchased contained 120 milligrams of caffeine and 100 milligrams of sodium benzoate, a proportion nearly equal to that of the illegal drug, but he failed to produce a hard copy.

A professor Wang from the food department of China Agri-

cultural University was quoted by the *Beijing Morning Post* on August 27 as saying the minuscule amounts of caffeine and sodium benzoate in Diet Coke could not affect consumers. In the same article, another expert acknowledged that other commercial soft drinks included both caffeine and sodium benzoate.

A similar diagnosis was given by Chen Junshi of the State Food Additive Committee. He told *Beijing Today* on Wednesday and that Diet Coke was produced according to national health requirements and that the low concentration of the suspect compounds in the drink did not qualify as forming the illegal drug.

China Southern Set to Join Global Airline Alliance

By Annie Wei

China Southern Airlines signed an agreement in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province last Saturday to become a member of the SkyTeam alliance, the company announced on its website.

Yan Zhiqing, chairman of the airline, signed the agreement with the CEOs of fellow SkyTeam members Korean Air and Air France.

SkyTeam, established in 2001, also includes Aeromexico, Delta Air Lines, CSA Czech Airlines and Alitalia. Together, the alliance members service 517 destinations in 121 countries with 8,300 flights a day and have annual traffic of more than 218 million passengers.

Yan was quoted on China Southern's website as saying the move was an important step in the airline's reforms and would strengthen its domestic and international competitiveness.

Guangdong-based China Southern Airlines operates an average of 2,900 scheduled flights per week serving 65 cities in China and 22 destinations outside the country with a fleet of 110 aircraft, including 92 Boeing planes. The company's annual sales reached 17.4 billion yuan in 2003.

With China Southern joining the alliance, the new Baiyun International Airport in Guangzhou would become SkyTeam's first air hub in China, a development that

could lead to exciting new business and growth opportunities for the Chinese carrier, he said.

Entering the SkyTeam family would also allow China Southern to share facilities, make joint purchases and connect to the alliance's frequent flyer mileage program. Jeff Ruffolo, the airline's public relations manager, said.

Among the top officials that attended Saturday's agreement signing ceremony were Yang Yanyuan, head of the Civil Aviation Administration of China, Guangdong Province Governor Huang Huahua and State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission Chairman Zhao Xizi.

Nippon Oil Ups Presence in Lubricant Market

By Sun Yongjian

Domestic lubricant oil makers are bracing for greater competition following news Nippon Oil Co. intends to establish a second lubricant oil joint venture in China, the *Beijing Times* said Monday.

An anonymous source from Japan-based Nippon Oil's prospective domestic partner Great Wall Lubrication Oil confirmed the news to *Beijing Today* on Wednesday.

Negotiations were going smoothly and the joint venture proposal had been forwarded to Sinopec, Great Wall's mother company, the insider noted. The deal awaited approval from the National Asset Supervision and Administration Commission, he said.

The joint venture will have \$15 million in registered capital, with half coming from Sinopec, 40 percent from Nippon Oil and 10 percent from Japan's Meiwa Corporation. Annual production capacity is expected to hit 50,000 liters after the company starts operations in 2006.

Establishment of the new joint venture was being matched by pushes to provide lubricating oil to domestic enterprises that have received Japanese investment as a means of bypassing Japanese trade barriers blocking China-made lubrication oil from being used by Japanese-based enterprises in this country, the Great Wall source said.

The creation of the new company could disrupt the market dominance of domestic companies Great Wall, Kunlun Lubrication Oil and Monarch Lubrication Oil, a market analyst was quoted as saying in the *Beijing Times* report.

Dutch Insurer Enters Capital Market

By Sun Yongjian

Holland-based ING Group N.V. (ING) and Capital Group announced Wednesday that their joint venture, ING Capital Life Insurance Company (ICLIC), had received approval from the China Insurance Regulatory Committee (CIRC) to establish a branch office in Beijing.

ICLIC's Beijing branch is scheduled to start operations in the first quarter of 2005, initially employing 300 sales agents and expanding to nearly 1,000 agents by the end of the year, according to a company press release.

The joint venture would offer

customers a mix of traditional life and personal accident policies, including universal life products and group insurance allowed by recent deregulation, it said.

ING Group Chairman Michel Tilmant was quoted as saying, "With permission to set up a branch in the highly important market of Beijing, ING's insurance activities are present in four major cities across China – Beijing, Dalian, Guangzhou and Shanghai. I am confident that by leveraging ING's global expertise and the unique local strength brought by our partner, Capital Group, we will be able to set the standard for financial services in Beijing."

Baosteel, Nippon, Arcelor Launch Steel Venture

By Sun Yongjian

Chinese authorities gave the green light to leading international steel firms BaoSteel, Nippon Steel Corporation and Arcelor on August 27 to establish a joint venture in Shanghai, a statement on Baosteel's website revealed the next day.

The new company, Baosteel-NSC Arcelor Automotive Steel Sheets Co., would be aimed at being the top domestic producer of high-grade steel sheet for use in automobile production, leaders from the three companies said at a ceremony for the joint ven-

ture's launch.

The joint venture would be located inside Baosteel's plant in Shanghai and have an annual production capacity of 1.7 million tons of steel, consisting of 900,000 tons of cold rolled steel products and 800,000 tons of hot rolled products, the statement said.

Investment in the company would total \$783 million and Baosteel would contribute 50 percent of its \$361 million of registered capital, the statement said. Nippon Steel will put up 38 percent and Arcelor 12 percent.

Full scale production is slated to begin next June.

Ericsson Reshuffles Bluetooth Structure

By James Liu

Ericsson, the inventor of Bluetooth technology, stopped designing, researching and developing Bluetooth solutions for semiconductors as of Monday and shifted the efforts to its subsidiary Ericsson Mobile Platforms (EMP).

A press release on the company's website explained the move was made because Bluetooth solutions had not become a major area of business for the telecom supplier. The reshuffling should be completed by the end of the year, the release said.

Only around 20 of the 125 employees in the Ericsson Technology Licensing department would continue to pro-

vide services to customers in the semiconductor sector, while the rest would move to EMP, a wholly-owned company Ericsson established in 2001, the *Beijing Morning Post* reported Tuesday.

"This will not affect Bluetooth solution promotion in China, as all of Ericsson's Bluetooth operations in China were already being handled by EMP," the report said.

A telecom industry analyst said that Ericsson gave up the designing of Bluetooth-enabled chips due to financial losses caused by the wide application of broadband and wireless local area network (LAN) technology, the newspaper said.

Saudi Gas Giant Eyes Chinese market

By Sun Yongjian

Aramco Company Overseas BV, a major international oil firm based in Saudi Arabia, is going to construct 600 gas stations in China's Fujian province, Stephen Lee, commercial director of the company's Hong Kong branch, told *Beijing Today* on Wednesday.

The first step in the project will be forming a domestic joint venture company with Chinese oil giant Sinopec. The joint feasibility report had already been submitted to Chinese authorities and approval was expected by the end of the year, Lee said.

Sinopec would put up 55

percent of the project's more than \$3.5 billion in starting capital, while the rest would be split by Aramco and US-based Exxon Mobile, he said.

Aramco is one of the world's 10 largest oil companies, the *Beijing Morning Post* reported Wednesday.

If things went smoothly, gas stations should start opening by the end of 2005, Lee said. "There is great potential in China's gas market," he noted.

Applications to open more than 2,000 new gas stations nationwide have been filed with Chinese authorities, the *Beijing Morning Post* said.

Asset Manager Takes Control of Lowly D'Long

By Sun Yongjian

Huarong Assets Management Company, one of four firms appointed by China's central bank to handle the non-performing loans of Chinese banks, is taking charge of asset reorganization at listed D'Long Group, a massive private company facing bankruptcy.

Three listed D'Long Group subsidiaries, Alloy Investment, Xinjiang Tunhe and Xianghuoju, announced the move through the website of the Shenzhen Stock Exchange on Tuesday.

Huarong has been empowered to have sole administration rights to handle the assets of the three D'Long companies

through lawsuits, shifting ownership, leasing, reorganization, bankruptcy and other methods, the statement said.

A priority for Huarong would be settling the individual liability of non-bank financial institutions under the umbrella of D'Long Group, it said.

D'Long used to be considered a model of private business success in China and owned equity stakes in over 170 listed companies. But poor fiscal management, according to some analysts, led to the breakdown of its funding chain and sent the company spiraling downwards to the brink of bankruptcy.

Philips to Boost Brand Image

By Sun Yongjian

Philips, known for its home electronic products such as televisions, shavers and lights, will launch a global marketing push on September 14 to promote its new brand image, Sun Jishan, senior director of the department of brand management and co-operate communications of Philips (China) told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday.

"The campaign will be accompanied by an attempt to adjust our future business directions without exerting influence on the existing business structure," Sun said. She explained the move was a response to recent domestic media reports that Philips was shifting from the home appliance sec-

tors to the healthcare and daily use commodities areas.

The company's current product portfolio of medical systems, lighting, semiconductors, consumer electronics and home appliances, would be lumped together into three major sections, namely healthcare, life style and technology, she said.

"Some aspects of the brand often overlooked by consumers, such as healthcare and lifestyle, will be boosted," Sun added.

"The Philips of today is different to the way the world perceives it. It is time to take action to let our customers understand this," Philips CEO Gerard Kleisterlee told the UK's *Financial Times* on August 25.

US May Use Oil Reserve If Half Imports Lost – Cheney

Washington, August 25 (Reuters) – The Bush administration indicated it would tap the US emergency crude oil stockpile if imports of 6 million barrels per day, or about half of the nation's daily oil and petroleum purchases, were halted.

Vice President Dick Cheney's comments during an Iowa campaign appearance on Tuesday marked the first time the administration has given a specific example of the type of emergency that would cause it to use the stockpile.

Cheney made it clear that the White House was not budging from its position, and would not release emergency oil unless there was a "national crisis."

If the United States "were dealing with a situation where we lost 5 or 6 million barrels a day, for example, out of the 20 million barrels a day that we currently consume, that

would be the kind of national crisis that would drive prices so high and probably bring large parts of our economy to a halt," Cheney said. Such a situation would require using the oil reserve, he said.

The vice president acknowledged there is "a temptation" to remove oil from the reserve and put those barrels in the market to "knock 20 or 30 cents off the price of a gallon of gasoline." But the relief would be short-lived and there would be less emergency oil to respond to a real supply crisis, he said.

The administration is in the process of filling the reserve to 700 million barrels by the middle of next year.

Democratic presidential challenger John Kerry opposes releasing oil from the stockpile at the moment, and instead supports a temporarily halt in filling the stockpile until petroleum prices drop.

Local Report:

As the lifeline of the American economy, if the petrol provision was cut by some sudden accident, the country will suffer a possible disaster, according to the Bush Administration.

The United States is always depicted as "a country on wheels". There are around 300 million vehicles in the country; the petrol consumption per day exceeds 20 million barrels, covering a quarter of the world's total petrol consumption.

Meanwhile the reliability of the petrol provision from the Middle East has fallen. The petrol price has soared nervously since August and once hiked to \$50 per barrel.

However, the argument for suspending the increase of the strategic reserve by many people including John Kerry, the presidential candidate of the Democratic Party, is also neglected by Bush's Administration. According to the statistics released by the Ministry of Energy, the petrol strategic reserve in June was 663 million barrels, but it was increased to 668.4 million barrels by August 27,

with an increase of 100,000 barrels per day.

Why is Bush so strongly determined to increase the petrol reserve especially when the high petrol price has given a negative influence to the economic growth?

It is mainly because of the September 11 attack shortly after Bush took the presidential position which became the turning point of the strategic petrol reserve policy of the US authorities.

In November of 2001, Bush gave an order to the Ministry of Energy to increase the strategic petrol reserve as rapidly as possible, aiming at a reserve limit of 700 million barrels by 2005.

On the other hand, according to the other point of Bush's policy, the strategic petrol reserve is used only when the United States has coordinated the position with other western countries for any unilateral actions will not make substantial influence to the international petrol market.

– International Finance News, August 31, 2004
(Sun Yongjian)

Japan, India Consider FTA

New Delhi, August 25 (Kyodo) – Japan and India agreed Wednesday to launch a dialogue on bilateral economic cooperation and other issues, with a view to beginning talks on concluding a free trade agreement between the two countries, Japanese officials said.

Japanese Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Shoichi Nakagawa proposed the start of the dialogue during a meeting in New Delhi with Indian Commerce and Industry Minister Kamal Nath, the officials said.

The ministers agreed trade and investment between the two countries was sluggish and decided to begin bilateral working-level talks on strengthening ties in a wide range of areas, they said. Details of the planned talks will be decided later.

Earlier in the day, Nakagawa met with Indian Finance Minister Palaniappan Chidambaram. During the talks, the Indian minister sought Japanese corporate investment in building infrastructure such as bridges and roads in the country, according to the officials.

Analyst's take:

There are four major reasons for Japan racing to sign a free-trade agreement (FTA) for bilateral trade deals with other countries, especially Asian countries:

First, the failure of the Cancun meeting in 2003 predicted a pessimistic future for WTO multilateral negotiation. It seems world trade is increas-

ingly going to be run on the basis of regional/bilateral agreements.

Second, China's economic power is growing rapidly. In November 2002, a framework agreement on comprehensive economic co-operation between China and the Association of South East Asian Nations was signed, thus starting the construction of a China-ASEAN Free Trade Area. Japan was deeply stirred by China's advancement and decided to quicken its own steps toward FTAs with ASEAN member countries separately, aiming to marginalize China's position in the Asian economy and retain its leading position.

Third, the growth of Japan's economy has slowed since the early 1990s, and in order to promote growth, more FTAs are needed.

The final point relates to the readjustment of Japan's economic strategy. China, Japan and India are the three biggest countries in Asia. Since China has achieved a framework agreement with ASEAN, and Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations have been somewhat frosty in recent years, Japan has turned its eyes to India. What's more, it seems to Japan that the potential market demand in India is huge, and that India also needs the technology and market that Japan can offer. So both sides are willing to strengthen their bilateral trade relationship.

– Li Guanghui, vice director of the Asia and Africa Research Center of the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Commerce of China.

(Wei Lixin)



Moscow International Book Fare Opens! The 17th Moscow International Book Fare, one of the ten largest book fairs in the world opened Wednesday with more than 2,000 participants from 80 countries and regions.

Photo by Zhang Weige

Greenspan Warns Against Deficits

Moves that would cut social security benefits among recommendations

August 26, 2004 New York (CNN/ Money) – Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan warned Congress Wednesday to move quickly to fix the nation's swollen budget deficit – including measures that could cut some future social security payments – to avoid even bigger problems for the nation's economy down the road.

Greenspan, in remarks to the House Budget Committee, noted the recent surge in the deficit is particularly dangerous, coming less than a decade before baby boomers begin drawing on federal retirement benefits.

"This dramatic demographic change is certain to place enormous demands on our nation's resources – demands we almost surely will be unable to meet unless action is taken," he said. "For a variety of reasons, that action is better taken as soon as possible."

Some are slamming Greenspan for warning that future cuts in social security and Medicare spending will be necessary. He proposed some solutions that would reduce future social security benefits to retirees, including raising the ages at which retirement benefits are paid and changing the inflation measure used to index the payments.

Analyst's take:

Social security, employer-sponsored defined pensions and personal savings together constitute the three-legged American retirement insurance system. Social security is the foundation of a secure retirement including old age, survivors, and disability insurance (OASDI). The capital resource of OASDI is the social security contributions paid by employers and employees.

Disputes on any changes to social security are deep seated. European countries have been discussing the problem for a long time, and some have taken measures such as raising the retirement age. Critics of the proposal to further raise the retirement age say most Americans now choose to retire early, and that it would be hard for some people to work past the current retirement age.

Social security is a pay-as-you-go retirement system. The social security taxes paid by today's workers and their employers are used to pay the benefits for today's retirees and other beneficiaries. Social security is now taking in more

money than it pays out in benefits, and the remaining money goes to the program's trust funds. There are now large "reserves" in the trust funds, but even this money is small compared to future scheduled benefit payments because the 77 million baby boomers will retire in ten years. If no changes are made, the pension funds will be exhausted in 30 years. At that time, social security will not be able to meet all of its obligations.

Some think that retirement security should adapt more to market principles; that is to say workers and employers should save more by having their own voluntary social security personal savings account as soon as they start work. By doing this, the pressure on the government to finance and run retirement pensions will be relieved. The other suggestion is that benefits should be reduced, like increasing the retirement age for full social security benefits or increasing tax rates.

Li Shaoguang, head of the Social Securities Research Center of Renmin University

Olympics Bill Swells Greek Deficits

Athens, September 1 (AFP) – The Greek state statistics service (EYSE) has reportedly raised its estimate for the country's public deficit in 2003 after taking into account the price of the Athens Summer Olympics.

ESYE now estimates the 2003 deficit at 4.6 percent of gross domestic product, sharply higher than the 3.2 percent initially forecast, while this year's shortfall would come to 5.3 percent of GDP, the quasi-state news agency ANA said.

The figures include spending for the Olympics, whose budget had been 4.6 billion euros (5.6 billion dollars). The bill was expected to exceed seven billion euros, including 1.2 billion for security, ANA said.

ESYE is supposed to submit the data next week to officials of the European Union's statistics office Eurostat, who are due to arrive in Athens to verify the country's accounts.

In early July EU finance ministers decided to launch excessive deficit procedures against Greece and issued warnings to six new members of the 25-state bloc – Cyprus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Malta, Poland and Slovakia -- for breaching the EU deficit limit of 3.0 percent of GDP.

The European Commission pressed Greece, a member of the 12-state eurozone, to rein in its deficit below the limit prescribed in the EU's Stability and Growth Pact by 2005.

The EU set a deadline of November 5 for the Greek government to take the necessary measures to meet that objective.

WTO OKs Sanctions Against US

Brussels, Belgium, August 31 (AP) – The World Trade Organization authorized the European Union and seven other leading US trading partners Tuesday to impose more than \$150 million worth of sanctions against the US for failing to repeal anti-dumping rules deemed illegal by the WTO.

The ruling allows the complainants to fine the US up to 72 percent of money collected from foreign exporters following the same principal as the so-called Byrd Amendment.

That legislation, dating from 2000, empowered Washington to hand over to US companies the duties imposed on foreign firms judged to be unfairly dumping cheap goods on the US market. A statement from the eight complainants estimated that the equivalent fees would have totalled about \$240 million last year.

However, the EU and the other complainants – Japan,



Pascal Lamy, European Union Trade Commissioner

Brazil, Canada, Chile, India, South Korea and Mexico - indicated they would hold off from imposing sanctions. Instead they are likely to use the threat of retaliation to press the US Congress for an early repeal of the legislation.

US officials pointed out that the WTO's ruling did not fully meet the requests of the complainants who had sought the right to increase import tariffs on selected US goods by the total amount collected in fines against their exporters in the previous year.

BT Warned Over Broadband Pricing

September 1, (FT.com) – Ofcom has fired a warning shot to BT over the pricing of its consumer high speed "broadband" internet service in a move that could see the telecoms operator forced to raise its prices.

The UK media and telecoms regulator yesterday sent a statement of objections to BT indicating that the group might have infringed UK and EU laws with its residential broadband pricing. Given its dominant position in the UK market, BT is prevented from adopting predatory pricing of its retail broadband service in a bid to gain market share.

BT's broadband price which

charged 29.99 euros a month from March 2002 for its basic consumer broadband service has been reduced. The telecoms operator's current entry-level broadband service, which provides users with access to the internet at speeds around 10 times faster than traditional dial-up modems, costs 19.99 euros a month.

If Ofcom finds against BT, it can force it either to raise its retail broadband prices or lower its wholesale prices. It can also impose fines of up to 10 per cent of BT's turnover, although it is understood that the regulator has so far refrained from threatening BT with a fine.

Big Companies to Become Big Spenders

August 31 (USA Today) – The moment many on Wall Street have been waiting for is finally here. After years of cost cutting, layoffs and cutbacks, the USA's biggest businesses are beginning to open their wallets to invest in, expand and upgrade their facilities.

Companies in the Standard & Poor's 500 are expected to boost capital spending 5.5% this year, reversing two years of cutbacks, says Howard Silverblatt, strategist at Standard & Poor's. They boosted spending 5.7% in the second quarter

after a first-quarter increase of 5.5%, the first back-to-back quarterly increases since the end of 2001, S&P says.

The rebound has been a long time coming. Companies slashed investing two years ago after spending too much during the boom, and in many cases, can't wait any longer to upgrade equipment or expand facilities.

Corporate America is sitting on a cash hoard following several quarters of record profits. "Companies have the money to buy what they need," Silverblatt says.

L'Oreal's Profit Up

Paris, September 1, (AP) – Successful product launches and strong demand in emerging markets helped cosmetics giant L'Oreal SA's profit rise 21.8 percent in the first half of the year. Revenue rose 3.6 percent to 7.40 billion euros from 7.14 billion euros, helped by rapid expansion in Asia and Eastern Europe.

In Asia, revenue rose 22.1 percent – 85.3 percent in China alone – with those figures adjusted for selloffs, acquisitions and exchange rate fluctuations. The biggest growth came from the professional

products division, where revenue rose 4.9 percent to 1.03 billion euros on an unadjusted basis. L'Oreal credited the launch of Redken for Men hair products.

Garnier's Fructis shampoos and gels lifted growth in consumer products, L'Oreal's largest division, which saw revenue rise 2.2 percent to 4.04 billion euros. Vichy's Liposyne slimming cream and La Roche Posay's Rosaliac skin products underpinned the active cosmetics branch's 16 percent jump in revenue to 498 million euros.

Halliburton Backs Away from Nigerian Bribes

New York, September 1 (Reuters) – Halliburton Company said an internal probe uncovered information suggesting that members of a consortium it helps lead considered bribing Nigerian officials to win business. The Houston-based company, once run by Vice President Dick Cheney, said late on Wednesday the payments concern the multi-billion dollar TSKJ Bonny Island liquefied natural gas plant project.

Halliburton said that beginning in 1995, the consortium entered into a series of agency agreements related to the project. But the company said it

has found no evidence that Nigerian officials were paid for business. The revelations are the latest in a difficult year for Halliburton, the world's No. 2 oilfield services company. It has been accused of overcharging on contracts for Iraq reconstruction and Afghanistan, and last month was accused in a filing in a shareholder lawsuit of "serial accounting fraud."

Halliburton said it has turned over the new information to the US Department of Justice, the US Securities and Exchange Commission and a French magistrate, and is turning over evidence to Nigerian officials.

Angry Car Owner Gets Asses to Drag BMW

By Zhou Ying

The owner of a problematic BMW sedan hitched the car to a three-donkey team on Sunday morning, planning to get the animals to drag the vehicle from Beijing to Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province.

The bizarre procession was cut short by police blockades shortly after it set out and the animals and other participants were sent packing.

The donkey train started its trek at the northwest corner of the Fourth Ring Road around 8 am. Behind them trailed the BMW 760i sedan as well as several people walking and carrying white banners that read: "Who can solve quality problems with BMWs?" Traffic police halted the donkey team after only 40 minutes, drawing a large crowd of onlookers.

Lin Jie, owner of the car and manager of the Shanghai Shali advertising company, told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday that his se-

dan became completely un-drivable less than six months after he bought it. "After I failed to negotiate with BMW's authorized local maintenance company to fix it, so I had to find the auto dealer, Zhongcheng Automobile Company in Hangzhou, to solve the problems," he said.

He explained that he had two reasons for arranging the donkey drive. First, it seemed the cheapest way to get the car to Hangzhou, and two, he wanted to draw public attention to "how BMW treats customers," he said.

It was not the first time a frustrated Chinese car owner used a strange stunt to get press coverage. In 2002, the owner of a faulty Mercedes-Benz car made headlines nationwide by arranging for several people to smash his luxury coupe with sledgehammers after he had the car repaired several times to no avail. Similar public foreign car flagellations occurred around the country short-



BMW owner Lin Jie said he thought donkeys would be the cheapest way to get his car to Hangzhou and would shine media light on his plight. Photo by Photocom

ly after.

Lin said he bought the car for more than 2 million yuan last November at the Harbin Auto Show.

"I found there was something wrong with its car alarm after Spring Festival. I immediately got it fixed at the Beijing Yanbao Automobile Service Company," Lin said.

"But I never expected that 11 more problems would crop up afterwards. Even the brakes just stopped working intermittently."

Yanbao serviced the car several times, yet it still was so problem-ridden that it could not be driven, he said.

"The front door windows can't close now. The service center recommended I get a new central processor for the car, but I just want to know why a new car should require so much service."

Li said he had tried to get the company to agree to repair the car once and for all and to promise to refund his money if problems continued, but the company

did not agree.

Ma Qingsheng, manager of the public relations department of BMW's China representative office told the *Beijing Morning Post* on Tuesday if Mr. Lin gave them a chance to repair the car, he could promise all the problems would be solved.

Lin said he still had doubts – "I've already given them several chances."

He told *Beijing Today* he felt he had no other choice but find the original dealer of the car in Hangzhou. "I really have no idea who can finally solve this problem. I know I can't afford to keep getting it repaired," Li said.

The secretary of the Hangzhou dealership's manager, who asked not to be named, said the company would do its best to satisfy Mr. Lin, but added it would be impossible to simply give him a new car, because his sedan had already been driven more than 20,000 kilometers.

Japanese Bomb Unearthed at Building Site

By James Liu

Construction workers were surprised when they uncovered a rusted 1.2-meter long, 300 kilograms bomb at a construction site on Wanliu Yihaolu in Haidian District on Monday.

"Judging from the shape, it is an aerial bomb dropped by the Japanese army in the 1930s. For some reason, it has never exploded," Guo Zhaokai, an explosives expert from Beijing Huachang Demolition Company, was quoted as saying by *Beijing Youth Daily* on Tuesday.

"Though its fuse cannot be found, the bomb could blow up at anytime because it is still packed full of explosives."

A worker surnamed Zhang of the Yonghehongsheng Public Works Company accidentally discovered the bomb when his shovel hit "something metal" as he was digging a channel at the site. "Then I realized it was a bomb!" Zhang told *Beijing Youth Daily*.

Two demolition experts from the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau arrived at the site later in the afternoon and concluded that the bomb could be removed after conducting a thorough examination.

Nine workers then gingerly hauled it out of the ground and put it in the back of a truck. With a two police car escort, the truck drove to a site in Changping County where local police keep explosive materials.

It was the fourth Japanese bomb left over from the 1930s invasion of China found in the Beijing region since last March.



Photo by Wang Wei

By Yu Shanshan

Renowned African-American dancer, choreographer and singer Debbie Allen made a splash in the capital Tuesday, leading nearly 100 young dancers in a class at a large studio on the campus of the Central Institute of Socialism.

Allen, an ambassador of the CultureConnect exchange program supervised by the US State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, chose to make China a stop on her world tour in the hopes of improving global cross-cultural un-

derstanding.

Asked what she would tell a young person desperate to make it as a dancer but not long on talent, Allen told *Beijing Today*, "I never tell people you can't do something. I was told that when I was young but I did everything, everything!"

She managed to instill similar confidence in the participants of Tuesday jazz dance class, in which she introduced students to the latest dance genre, hip hop.

Over more than two hours, the young dance lovers, including some *Beijing Today*

readers and five athletes from the Chongwen Special School's dance troupe, followed her steps while keeping up with the heavy hip hop grooves.

"It was so much fun. She seems to have a power to get us to release our enthusiasm to dance – even for those of us who didn't know we had it," Wang Jiangci, a local elementary school teacher, said after the class.

Allen will continue her domestic lessons at dance sessions in Chengdu, Sichuan Province and Shanghai in coming weeks.

No Foul Play Involved in Lost Lion Ear

By Zhou Ying

The Beijing Cultural Relics Bureau has ruled that weather, not a human saboteur, is to blame for the disappearance of the right ear from an ancient lion statue on Lugou Bridge in Fengtai District.

The bureau said investigations conducted by its experts this week showed the ear was worn away by natural erosion and that continuing checks would look into whether the other lion statues on the bridge were at risk and how best to protect them from the punishing hands of wind and rain.

The faces of several other lions were also showing signs of painful weathering, Zhang Chengju, deputy director of the Fengtai Culture Committee told *Beijing Youth Daily* on Tuesday. "I have personally seen four lions that only have half their faces intact," he was quoted as saying.

The investigations were launched after a local resident noticed the worrying damage to the Lugou Bridge lions. An unnamed woman told the Beijing newspaper *The Mirror* last Sunday that she discovered the night before that an ear on one lion looked like it had been hacked at with a knife or axe. She suspected a man she had seen on the bridge that day carrying a wooden stick and promptly called the authorities, she said.

Zhang said related local administrations created protection files for the bridge's lions that contained detailed photographs of each statue in 2001. "Using the pictures, we can see that the lions in question were already damaged in 2001. Therefore, we can exclude the possibility it they were recently damaged by human hands," he added.

Killer of Pregnant Woman Convicted

By Wang Fang

On Monday morning, 21-year-old Shanghai native Cai Qing confessed to the Beijing No.2 Intermediate People's Court that he killed a pregnant woman at Zhaogongkou Qiao in Beijing and stole her personal belongings this April. Cai also confessed to committing another murder-robbery in Shanghai the same month.

The evening of April 19, Cai was standing under the pedestrian overpass near Zhaogongkou Qiao in Fengtai District, waiting for victims, according to his court statement. Around 8 pm, he saw Ms. Liu get off a bus carrying a yellow plastic bag and run up behind her, trying to grab the bag.

"I didn't know she was pregnant," he later said in his confession. Liu struggled to hold onto the bag and called for help. The desperate Cai then stabbed her and ran away with the pair of shoes she was carrying in the bag.

New Drivers Get Official Markings

By Dong Nan

Starting Wednesday, gone are common handwritten signs reading "new driver" from the back windows of cars steered by inexperienced drivers. That day, local vehicle management departments started distributing official versions on which the characters *shixi*, or "new hand" are printed in bright red against a yellow background.

Drivers that have held licenses for less than a year are required to put the signs on the back of their vehicles, next to the license plates, and those that do not comply as of October will face fines of 100 yuan. The new local regulations also say the signs cannot be posted on cars' rear windows.

The signs will be distribut-



Cai Qing has yet to be sentenced for the two murders.

home in Shanghai's Songjiang District on April 14 and fled to Beijing the following day.

Before the court, Cai offered no explanations for his crimes. After he was arrested, he said, "I let my parents down and I feel guilty to the relatives of the victims. I am a sinful person and if I was sentenced to death, it would not make up for my crimes," according to police records.

Liu's bereft husband and parents attended the hearing, and her mother fainted during the proceedings.

The court has yet to announce its sentence of Cai.



Photo by Gao Shan

ed to new drivers when they get their licenses. Anyone who fails to receive a needed shixi sign can ask for one from their local vehicle management department.

Ambitious Student Aspires to Cheat at Science Fair

By Zhang Nan

A high school student hoping to earn scientific glory without actually doing the work has made an online offer of 100,000 yuan to purchase a science project of such merit that he could win first place in a national technology competition next year and even take part in overseas science fairs.

The sweetest reward for a blue ribbon finish would be enrollment at a top domestic university without having to take the National University Entrance Examination, as Ministry of Education rules say high school gold and silver medalists at that science fair can sidestep the notoriously difficult test.

The student, who identified him or herself a high school student from the Huazhong area of central China under the online moniker Hefeng Qingwu, claimed to desperately want to

take part in the 20th National Youth Technical Creation Competition next April, but was afraid there was insufficient time to prepare. Therefore, purchasing someone else's work seemed the best bet for securing first prize.

The student later posted a notice that he received a potential project from someone in Shenzhen and would send 10,000 to the creator after carefully inspecting the project report.

In order to prevent similar scams, organizers of the 19th National Youth Technical Creation Competition held last month in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, asked participants to turn in documents proving that all projects, designs and research represented their own independent work. Regional scientific associations were also brought onboard to rigorously examine all reports for authenticity.

Court Convicts Con Artists of Bilking Professor of Millions

By Zhang Nan

Justice has come to a conwoman and her accomplice son who took advantage of the sympathetic heart of Chen Shufang, a famous professor at the Central Academy of Drama, to bilk her of 2.3 million yuan over three years.

The confidence scams drained Chen's savings and forced her to borrow money from friends and family. Now the 64-year-old professor and her 70-year-old husband are fervently working filming movies to repay their debts.

The criminals, Zhang Xiangmei and her son Wang Yu, were declared guilty by the Beijing Second People's Court on July 8. Zhang

received a 15 year prison sentence, while Wang, who was only 16 when the scams started, was given three years' jail time.

Wang was one of Chen's students in 1997, after Chen had retired and was doing voice teaching at Beijing Huawen Art College. Wang's family was poor, as his parents were divorced and he lived with his unemployed mother on her mere 800 yuan in monthly welfare payments.

Chen apparently was moved by the family's plight and easily taken in by their schemes.

The crimes started in 1998, when Zhang lied to Chen that the Ministry of Finance was selling off some old Hongqi-brand cars.

The professor agreed to buy one, and Zhang skimmed off 50,000 yuan from the deal, allowing her and Wang to suddenly live in luxury.

By continuing to give Chen excuses for needing to borrow money, from almost being forced to sell their home to covering the costs of Zhang's ex-husband's funeral, the mother-son team managed to squeeze a steady stream of money from the unsuspecting professor.

It was only after Chen calculated that Zhang had borrowed 2.3 million yuan from her over the years that she started to get suspicious and demanded Zhang repay her debts.

Soon after, Wang attempted suicide, apparently because he knew his mother did not have the money. Chen and her husband still went to the hospital to care for him, but Wang and Zhang later disappeared.

Chen finally understood she was being cheated all along and called the police, she told the court.

A year after their disappearance, the mother and son criminals were captured in a Beijing hotel. They refused to tell police how they had spent the large sum scammed from Chen, and authorities were only able to confiscate two cars in Zhang's possession.

First the Glory, Now the Cash

By Zhou Ying

The Athens Olympics came to a close on Sunday. China came second in the overall medals tally, just behind the United States, with 32 gold, 17 silver and 14 bronze.

This surprise success earned high praise from the central government. However, for the sports stars of Athens, the gold medals means not only glory and pride, but also cash like never before.

According to *People's Daily*, the central government has promised prizes of up to 200,000

yuan (US\$24,000) for Olympic medalists, and individual provinces also plan to rain cash on their native stars.

Yunnan, for example, will give Zhang Guozheng, who won men's 69kg weightlifting gold, US\$180,000 for being the first person from the province to capture Olympic gold. Guangdong will give 250,000 yuan to each of its gold medal winners; Sichuan will pay out 500,000 yuan and the Shanxi authorities have said their stars will get as much as 1,000,000 yuan.

Hurdling star Liu Xiang is

set to collect 3,500,000 yuan (US\$400,000) just in government prizes, after becoming the first Chinese man to win gold at an Olympic track event. And his commercial earnings could be several times that.

Still to come are the commercial endorsements, speaking engagements and free merchandise that are par for the course in developed nations. Chinese motorcycle makers, property developers and others already have announced gifts of their own. Huo Yingdong Foundation has generously offered to award

each gold medalist US\$80,000 plus a gold medal weighing two kilograms.

While the public cheer China's success in Athens, some have questioned whether it's right for the authorities to hand out so much taxpayer's money to the athletes. They insist that local governments shouldn't hand out cash just as they like.

Wang Xin, a sophomore student from Beijing University

I think it is fair that the government should reward those Olympic medalists. Achievements in the field of sport can, to

some extent, reflect that Chinese people's living standards have improved, and that the nation's strength has been enhanced.

However, I think we should pay attention to the extent of the prizes offered. The medalists have received honors and medals one after another when they came back. The government said in a message broadcast repeatedly on CCTV that "The excellent performance by China's athletes again shows the spirit of the Chinese nation's unrelenting efforts to improve itself." Besides recognizing their spirit, the central government, local governments and enterprises also offer fiscal rewards.

However, we can see some problems with this issue. The local governments from different provinces will compare the amounts they offer, giving as much as possible. Under such circumstances, the amount of money will be raised beyond control. I want to know how the government has so much money to give to the athletes when they cannot afford to build gymnasiums for the public.

What I want to say is that the Chinese government should not only pay high attention to the Olympic medalists. It should also attach importance to the development of public sports.

Wu Yu, a freelance writer

Viewing the number of prizes from each local government, we can see that the reason why they give them so much money is that the local government can profit from it too. It is a win-win game.

Nowadays, the local government will spare no effort to attract investments, such as to hold a certain kind of festival to make the local area famous. The Olympic heroes are not only famous in China; they can also attract eyeballs of foreign friends. In that case, if you introduce one province to other people by saying that this is the hometown of a certain gold medalist, then it will be more attractive.

To take advantage of the reputation of athletes is really a good way to enhance local development. I gather some medalists have even become leaders of their local province, without being elected by the public. They can bring more business opportunities to the province so I think it is worth giving them a large amount of prize money.

Liu Xiaoren, a journalist from China Youth Daily

After Zhu Qinan became the first person from Wenzhou to capture Olympic gold, some local enterprises gave him more than 320,000 yuan as a bonus. I think this shows there are multi-level channels for investment in sports.

To rain cash on winners seems to be a tradition in China. However, it is the government that plays the major role in this issue. The government has made efforts to invest in physical education and harness China's sporting resources in a practical way in order to achieve success at the highest level. However, this can also lead to obstacles in economic development.

The government has always paid for the cost of gymnasium construction in China. However, in western countries, this task belongs to the whole of society. The amount of investment from society is five times as much as from the government. The role of the government is mainly to provide reasonable order in the market and making laws.

I think the government should open investment in gymnasium construction to the public, even including the organization of competition. This policy could help popularize athletic sports.

Zheng Hong, a stockbroker

The central government decided to reward the Olympic winners in 1992. But because Chinese athletes made such great achievements, some local governments also take part in rewarding them. Therefore some champions receive huge bonuses.



Liu Xiang, gold medal winner in the men's 110-meter hurdling

Photo by Imagine China

I really think it is necessary to reward medalists. However, I think the amount of the prize from the local government should be controlled. All of the money the government spends is provided by workers and taxpayers, so the government is not entitled to waste money. I mean the government should not just hand out as much money as it wants. There should be some regulations.

Paul Mooney, a freelance journalist

This is not an issue in the US. Many Olympic athletes in America who return home with Gold medals will get lucrative advertising endorsements from companies like Nike or Addidas, but they don't get any money from the government as a reward. The system is a bit different between the US and China. In China, athletes are usually cultivated by the government, but in the US, people who want to become Olympic competitors have to basically find a way to support themselves as they pursue their sports. I'm sure that these athletes will be more than happy to get endorsements and gifts, but at the same time, the vast majority do this for the pure love of sports and competition, and would participate even if there were no chance of getting rich.

If American athletes came back and their state or the federal government gave them bonuses for their performance, I think some people would be upset. Most people would rather see their taxes go to deal with problems such as education or poverty. But if these athletes can get some money from sponsors, I think that's great. But one has to wonder about the wisdom of Yunnan giving a weightlifter US\$180,000 for being the province's first Gold medal winner, when countless children are unable to finish primary school in the province because they're too poor. I've traveled extensively around the province visiting schools and talking to teachers and students and their parents, and have found that many rural children in Yunnan, as in other inland provinces, have to drop out of primary school because they can't afford the fees and tuition. There is also a serious lack of good hospitals and medical care in these areas. It seems outrageous to shower athletes with so much money, when poverty is such a big problem.

On the other hand, endorsements and government bonuses can also be unfair. They give an advantage to athletes from wealthier countries, such as the United States, that have more money to give away. Athletes from third world countries have far fewer chances to get such help, and this puts them at a greater disadvantage in future competitions, and it widens the gap.



Graffiti in Tongzhou District

Graffiti:

Art or Trash?

By Dong Nan

Graffiti on two 50-meter walls in Dongdajie Hutong, Dongcheng District has been cleaned off by the local authorities. Some residents were upset by some of the images, such as devils and fiends and a face with tears of blood. There were also various English words daubed on the wall. Dongcheng City Patrol, Jiaodaokou Branch cleaned it all off the day after being alerted.

Sun Jianhua, head of the Jiaodaokou Branch, told the media that the city patrol was trying their best to find the graffiti artists responsible, and he said they would be heavily fined if found. He said that all the graffiti on public buildings, including ruins, abandoned houses and rails of building sites should all be cleaned off as well.

Is graffiti an art or rubbish? Should it be tolerated in China? Opinions follow:

Sun Jianhua, head of Jiaodaokou Branch, Dongcheng City Patrol

We'll clean off all the graffiti and punish those responsible, according to the *Beijing Cityscape and Environmental Sanitation Regulation*, which was released by the People's Congress of Beijing in 2002. It says that individuals and enterprises should not paint things such as advertisements or slogans on buildings, and those who do so should be fined from 1,000 to 10,000 yuan.

As to places such as ruins and abandoned houses, they are a kind of public area as well. We will clean off any graffiti we find.

Some might claim that this graffiti is a kind of "art work", and many foreign cities allow it. But this is Beijing, and we should follow Beijing's regulations and consider the national situation. Besides, the graffiti on Dongdajie Hutong made people scared and annoyed; how can you call it an "art work"?

Lao Xu, graffiti artist and painter

I think there are two kinds of graffiti artists in China. One is teenagers who are vigorous and adore this style of painting on public areas at night; the other is artists who truly want to express something. I am the latter.

I believe that the power and charm of graffiti is that it can express your thoughts and spirit

most directly. It is a challenge to mainstream order. I think that Beijing, as an international metropolis, needs to have such non-mainstream things; and people need some inspiration in their common daily life. By the way, I have seen the photos of graffiti in Dongcheng District. I don't think it's that scary. People's reactions were too drastic.

As for myself, I always select the place I paint carefully, such as ruins, or disused buildings. However, I know clearly that making graffiti will be punished by city patrols. If they get me, I will take my responsibility, of course. However, I hope they could allow people and artists to see my work first, and then decide whether it really spoils the cityscape and disturbs others before they decide to fine me and clear away my work.

My latest works are on four highway pillars in the southeast suburbs of Beijing. There used to be no beautification measures in that kind of area, and those places were always neglected by people. But now my works are there and make it more interesting.

Wu Ning, freelance designer, Nanjing citizen

In many foreign cities such as New York and Paris, graffiti can be seen everywhere. In the US, graffiti masters including Keith Harling and Jean-Michel Basquiat enjoy a reputation as high as that of traditional painters.

Graffiti in western countries experienced a course of development for more than 20 years. For example, the end of the 1980s witnessed a flowering of graffiti in Paris. You could find it on subway stations, buses and every street corner. After that, the government tried to restrict it and punish the graffiti artists, but they weren't too successful. So they opened some special zones for graffiti and regulated what kind of buildings were allowed to have graffiti painted on them. This approach was more successful.

As for China, such kind of graffiti is really rare. In Nanjing, where I live, I have heard about street graffiti, but I've never seen it. I think graffiti in China is far from a "problem". The city patrol doesn't need to make a fuss about it. And it is better for the government to regulate it than to forbid it.

Tan Bodeng, freelance writer

In cities, advertising can be

seen everywhere in the street. A lot of it is far worse than graffiti, I think, but no one questions whether it spoils the cityscape. I think it suggests that as long as you have money, you have the right to express yourself in public. It is a kind of hegemony. I think artists should be given the right to create works in the street, and to show the true spirit of this city. With proper management, it would not spoil the cityscape, but make living here more interesting.

Zou Wen, tutor at the Fine Arts Department, Academy of Arts and Design, Tsinghua University

I think the city should be tolerant of graffiti, a kind of "city folk art". It is a way for people to show their creativity and passion. Maybe we should sacrifice some "neatness" and "orderliness" to allow people a new way to show their individuality and imagination.

Of course, self-discipline is needed for those graffiti artists. For example, architecture is a kind of art as well; if graffiti artists paint on a building and spoil the look of it, it would be improper and disrespectful to other artists.

China is experiencing the greatest time in its history; and Beijing is to hold the 2008 Olympic Games. I believe that if Beijing encourages alternative things, it can offer a better international image than merely a neat and orderly one.

Yu Huayun, director of the City Sculpture Committee

I agree that graffiti is an aspect of social development. However, the city must have order, something that is also a major characteristic of other modern cities. It would be nice to see some graffiti in the 798 arts zone, but I think it is improper to paint it on the walls of other people's buildings. If you just paint anywhere, it's not art.

Mia Larsen, Danish student majoring in computer science

It's very interesting to see that people do the same kind



Graffiti in Dongdaqiao Hutong

Photo by Beijing News

A Different Way to Die

By Dong Nan

Last month, the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences released a report called *"Death in China and its Reasons"*, which was about the causes of death of Chinese people from 1991 to 2000.

"In those ten years, there was a great change in the major causes of death," said Yang Gonghuan, leader of the research group to *Beijing Today*. "Many new problems were found through the report. It is not only a medical problem but has to do with society, the environment and the economy. The public should pay attention to it, and it is a reference for medical scientists."

The research began in 1989 and was based on causes of death of 600,000 Chinese people, both in cities and rural areas.

Big killers

The research found that cardiovascular disease is the No.1 killer among diseases in China. The proportion of death is 287.53/100,000 (among 100,000 people, 287.53 die of cardiovascular disease) every year.

Cerebrovascular disease (disease of the brain), ranks third at 133.78/100,000, just behind tumors (135.16/100,000). In 1991, the number of people dying from cerebrovascular disease was 83.87/100,000. So it has increased by some 50% in the last ten years.

Yang pointed out that both cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases are greatly influenced by lifestyle. Both diseases are more serious in urban areas than in rural areas. People living in cities have a higher living standard but they do less exercise and physical work, and eat food with more oil and fat.

However, according to Yang, the causes of death in rural areas are becoming similar to those in urban areas. This is mainly because of urbanization. For example, according to the research, many peasants in Guangdong Province rent out their land for manufacturing, real estate developing, construction and other things, and do not farm by themselves. Therefore, the death rate from cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases has become higher in these places as well.

Cancer and smoking

In 1991, gastric cancer topped the list of the death rate from tumors at 19.96/100,000. By 2000, it had been replaced by lung cancer, at 29.1/100,000. The death rate from lung cancer used to be 17.3/100,000 in 1991. So in the last ten years, the rate has increased by 60%.

"During the ten years, China witnessed an increase in the proportion of senior citizens in the population, and many old people died of cancer," said Yang. "However, the major reason for this

increase in lung cancer is cigarette consumption."

In 1991, the death rate from lung cancer was 23.83/100,000 among men, and 10.51/100,000 among women. By 2000, the numbers were 40.24/100,000 and 17.55/100,000.

Yang said that before the 1970s, the production of cigarettes in the whole nation was 700,000 boxes every year, and put on ration. However, from 1978 to 1990, production increased drastically from 12.03 million boxes to 38.56 million every year, a number which has remained fairly stable during the 1990s.

Yang predicted that in the next 20 years, the death rate from lung cancer would keep on increasing.

Tuberculosis and AIDS
Tuberculosis (TB) used to be a terrible scourge before the 1950s in China, especially in rural areas. After that, along with the development of medical services, the death rate from TB kept falling. In 1991, the death rate from TB was 11.15/100,000 in rural areas.

However, since 1994, when it was at 6.83/100,000, the rate has not fallen. The most affected areas were Guizhou, Guangxi, Hunan, Ningxia, Inner Mongolia, Tibet, Xinjiang, and some districts in Shandong and Anhui.

Yang said that this might have something to do with AIDS, since among those provinces and

autonomous regions, the level of AIDS infection was also serious.

According to research from the World Health Organization in 2003, TB had become the major reason for death among AIDS sufferers; among every three AIDS victims, one succumbed in the end to TB.

By the end of 2002, China had around one million AIDS sufferers, 80% of them in rural areas. Many peasants were infected with AIDS in the course of selling their blood to donation units.

Last year, a story about Shuangmiao Village, Shangqiu City, Henan Province, known as an "AIDS village", shocked the whole nation. Around 700 villagers were found to have AIDS, and 800 children were soon to become orphans. Most of the people had been infected during the course of selling their blood.

Change in suicide

Suicide used to top the non-disease causes of death. However, in 2000, it gave way to traffic accidents (17.82/100,000), while death from suicide was at 16.26/100,000.

According to Yang, in China the social background of suicide is a little different from many foreign countries. For instance, in rural areas, the rate of suicide was always higher among women than men.

In many foreign countries, men living in cities become

overburdened by pressure from society and this can lead to suicide. According to Yang, in developed western countries, 90% of people who commit suicide have mental problems, while in China the number of mentally disturbed suicides is 60%.

"It is mainly because in many poverty-struck rural areas, many women used not to be able to receive much education. Their views were narrow, and their lives were parochial. Whenever they quarreled with their husband or suffered from injustice, they did not know how to express themselves or let out their anger and grievances. So it was easier for them to think of committing suicide, simply to show their rage or to prove their innocence. And the most popular method was to drink poisonous pesticides, which were easy to get in rural areas," said Yang.

However, thanks to the development of society, and improvements in education and public communication, especially the popularity of TV in rural areas, things have improved. According to the research, in 1987 the number of women in rural areas who committed suicide was 1.37 times that of men; the number fell to 1.17 in 1990, and 1.12 by 2000. Yang predicted that in the future, the rate of suicide among men would exceed that of women.

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Bricks and ancient relics of the Han Dynasty will soon be inundated.

Photo by Photocomer

By Wang Fang

On December 27, 2002, the South-to-North Water Diversion Project began in Beijing, Jiangsu Province and Shandong Province. It aims to divert water from the Yangtze River valley to the reaches of the Yellow River, the Huaihe River and the Haihe River so as to ensure water supply for the drought-ridden northern China. But the project, which will inundate central plains in China containing numerous cultural relics, has become beset by disagreements over how best to protect the cultural heritage before it's swept underwater.

The big idea

The idea of moving water from the south to the north originated in 1952 when Mao Zedong said during an inspection tour to the Yellow River, "The north of China needs water and the south has plenty; if possible, the north may borrow some water from the south." From then on, five decades of geological surveys have been carried out. In 2000, the overall layout of the project was decided: it should have three water diversion routes, namely an east, middle and west route. Diversion of water along the first two routes is slated for 2008, while for the west route it's 2010.

The east route will divert water from the Yangtze River near Yangzhou, Jiangsu, pumping water northward via the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal and its parallel river courses and connecting Hongze lake, Luoma lake, Nansi lake and Dongping lake. After traversing the Yellow River, water will flow to Tianjin. The middle route will divert water from the Danjiangkou Reservoir on the Hanjiang River, a tributary of the Yangtze River. After traversing the Yellow River at Gubaizui west to Zhengzhou, it will flow towards Beijing.

Along these two routes, there are 10 principal cultural relics needing salvage. They are the ancient Hangzhou Section of the Grand Canal, the Mengcheng Post House of the Ming Dynasty and Zhenguo Temple Tower in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province; the Ming Tombs and Hexia Ancient Town in Huai'an, Jiangsu Province; the Tax Bureau of the Grand Canal in Linqing, Shandong Province; Yuzhen Palace in Wudang Mountain, Hubei Province; Jingle Palace in Junxian, Hubei Province; the Tombs of the Chu Kingdom in the Spring and Autumn Period in Xichuan, Henan Province; Xing Porcelain Kiln in Lincheng, Hebei Province; the ancient tomb groups in Yunyang, Hubei Province; relics in Danjiangkou, Hubei Province and Zhenjiangying Relics in Beijing.

For example, for the planned construction of the central route of the project in Hubei Province, Wang Hongxing, director of the

Water Before Relics

With the water level rising from the current 157 meters to 170 meters in 2008, the submerged area will expand to about 370 square kilometers, inundating many sites, containing fossils of the dinosaur eggs dating back 60 million years, human skeleton from the Old Stone Age as well as buildings of the Ming Dynasty, according to the Yangtze Water Resources Committee.

provincial Archeology Research Institute claimed, "Many cultural relic sites in the Danjiangkou Reservoir area, where ancient culture was highly developed, need rescuing before the construction is kicked off."

As the resource to provide water in the central route of the project, Danjiangkou Reservoir is scheduled to divert large amounts of water to northern regions. With the water level rising from the current 157 meters to 170 meters in 2008, the submerged area will expand to about 370 square kilometers, inundating many sites, containing fossils of the dinosaur eggs dating back 60 million years, human skeletons from the Old Stone Age as well as buildings of the Ming Dynasty, according to the Yangtze Water Resources Committee.

Many of the archeological discoveries in this area belong to the same culture as those salvaged at the Three Gorges Project, said Wang Hongxing.

However, the obstacles and the pressure experienced by the archeologists are far greater than the ones they encountered in the Three Gorges Project.

"We don't have the final word"

At the beginning of last month, at the latest conference regarding the protection of cultural relics in the project, it was decided that the Ministry of Water Resources would be in charge of deciding how many cultural relics in the project needed rescuing, not the Cultural Relics of-

fice. This means that the cultural relics departments in all provinces have to turn in their investigation and survey outcomes to the corresponding water resources department, and then the Yangtze Water Resources Commission for consideration.

"I am afraid that this is the essential difference from the power we had in the excavation of the cultural relics in the Three Gorges Project," said Wang Fengzhu, the deputy of the Project Office in Hubei Cultural Affairs Office. He had been responsible for the cultural relics protection work in the Hubei section in the Three Gorges Project for more than 10 years before taking charge of the same work in the South-to-North Water Diversion Project. He said that in the Three Gorges Project, the cultural relics department in each province only needed to turn in their investigation and survey report to the upper cultural relics department for approval and then they could ask the construction department for funds. However, this time, "we don't have the final word on how many cultural relics need protection or not. Though by law, the final approval right should be controlled by the State Relics Bureau, our investigation has to get approval from the Yangtze Water Resources Commission first."

According to him, the Yangtze Water Resources Commission had its own archeological investigation team in Hubei Province with only two or three main members. However, the commission deemed that their team was competent to carry out the investigation and survey of the cultural relics in the Hubei Section. Therefore, the cooperation between this team and the local cultural relics department was not harmonious from the very beginning. Until now, Wang Fengzhu and his co-workers have not heard from the Commission on the four thick and comprehensive investigation reports they handed in 2003, reports which had cost them about 2 million yuan to compile.

"This vexes me. The commission is reluctant to give any re-

sponse and if it decides to delay the response, we might not have any time to finish the rescuing work before the project begins."

Money is the most important issue

There are only four years left for experts to carry out the rescue work before the water inundates the precious cultural relics.

Moreover, they are also concerned about the progress of protection efforts as many of the cultural relics, especially the ancient ones, have been damaged over the years and are in a fragile state.

"The excavation can't be carried out in full swing because we haven't enough money," said Li Taoyuan, a research fellow with the Hubei Provincial Archeology Research Institute.

Wang Fengzhu also backs up Li's concern. He said, "Money is the most important issue. In the Three Gorges Project, since the cultural department had the final say on the excavation, we could ask for money from the construction department face to face and they were not qualified to question our requirements. However, things are different in this project. We don't have the final word and the Yangtze Water Resources Commission does not care about our work."

The lack of funds also casts a shadow over the Yuzhen Palace, one of the palaces at Wudang Mountain, itself listed among the World Cultural Heritage. Since the Yuzhen palace is at the foot of Wudang Mountain and attracts fewer tourists, there are no funds to protect it. A year ago, fire swept the Palace and the accident shocked the world. In the coming South-to-North Water Diversion Project, the bottom half of the Yuzhen Palace is facing submersion. It will need at least 100 million yuan to carry out the best method to protect it by raising the building. However, the local cultural relics department does not have enough money to do this.

More coordination please

Lin Chun, the head of the cultural relics protection work in the Yangtze Water Resources Commission, said that this project had the same decision-making procedure problem as the Three Gorges Project. "Sometimes it is unclear which department is responsible for which work and it makes the whole thing less efficient."

"We are in need of an efficient coordinating team," said Luo Zhewen, a famous expert on ancient architecture and also an advisor to the Yangtze Water Resources Commission. According to him, the establishment of such a team would be good for the project as a whole since it can give strategic instructions to local cultural relics departments.

By Jiang Yongzhu

From Jiangsu Province to Beijing and then back to Jiangsu, 13 factory workers who have got mercury poisoning have been fighting for their legal rights for five months, seeking recognition of their complaint. After continually reporting to the Ministry of Health, they received a written document calling on the local authorities to help them. However, nothing has happened yet.

Poisoning!

Wang Libiao, 48, started to work for Tiling Thermometer Factory in Yandu County, Yancheng City in Jiangsu in 1997. He witnessed this state-owned factory's rise and fall. At the end of 1999, the factory was rented to a man named Xu Xuehai by the government. From then on, Wang Libiao, along with his 163 co-workers, began to work for Xu Xuehai.

"It was in 2001 that I found there was something wrong with me," Wang told *Beijing Today*. "I didn't take it seriously at that time, but this year I could not ignore it any more." Wang suffered continually from headaches, toothache, insomnia, memory lapses and other problems.

He went to the county hospital for a physical examination. The result surprised him: he was diagnosed with mercury poisoning. The normal level is to have 0.01 mg/L of mercury in the blood. However, there was 0.78 mg/L in Wang's blood.

After that, 12 other workers also went to take tests and were also diagnosed with mercury poisoning. According to the hospital, their condition was as serious as Wang Libiao's.

The workers asked the factory to pay for their treatment. However, Xu Xuehai refused to shoulder the responsibility, saying there was no proof that the workers had been poisoned in his thermometer factory.

The workers reported this situation to the local government, but they didn't get any response. In May 2004, six of the 13 went to Beijing to seek help. Finally, they got a government document urging the local government to help solve the workers' problem.

The workers also collected evidence proving that their poisoning was caused by working in the Tingling Factory. They assumed that now Xu Xuehai would have to pay for their medical treatment.

However, the matter was not that simple. Xu then claimed that the employment contract between him and the 13 workers had ended several months previously, so the factory did not have to pay a penny towards their treatment.

"It's none of my business"

Tingling Factory was once a state-owned enterprise. In 1999, the factory faced bankruptcy, so the local government rented it to Xu Xuehai, who had been working there for 20 years. The contract regulated that the legal rights of the workers should be covered by Xu Xuehai.

In 2004, the factory had turned things around and was doing much better than before. It began to make a profit and some local businessmen expressed an in-

Poisoned Workers Seek Help

terest in buying the factory. The factory was put up for auction in April 2004, and a man named Duan paid 2,560,000 yuan to buy it. Xu was given one month to hand over the factory.

"I felt bad when I had to leave," he said. "It was during that time I decided to open a factory of my own." Xu told his plan to the workers and 80 percent of them signed a contact with him, while the other 20 percent including the 13 poisoned workers, didn't.

However, the buyer of the factory changed his mind and the government allowed Xu Xuehai to continue to rent it. But to Xu, the situa-

tion was not the same any longer. He only took the people who signed a contract with him as his employees. He refused to employ the other 20 percent. So he said he would not pay the medical fees for those people, especially the 13 workers who he said had "caused him a lot of trouble".

The workers believed that the factory should pay for the treatment and are preparing to go to court. Yao Huanqing, Professor of the Law School of People's University, told *Beijing Today* that it didn't matter whether, as Xu claimed, the employment contract was over or not. "The point is that workers got poisoned from work, so no matter whether the employment term has ended or not, the factory should shoulder the responsibility."

Harsh future

Mercury is a neurotoxin, meaning it affects the nervous system. It can cause personality changes, nervousness, trembling, and even dementia.

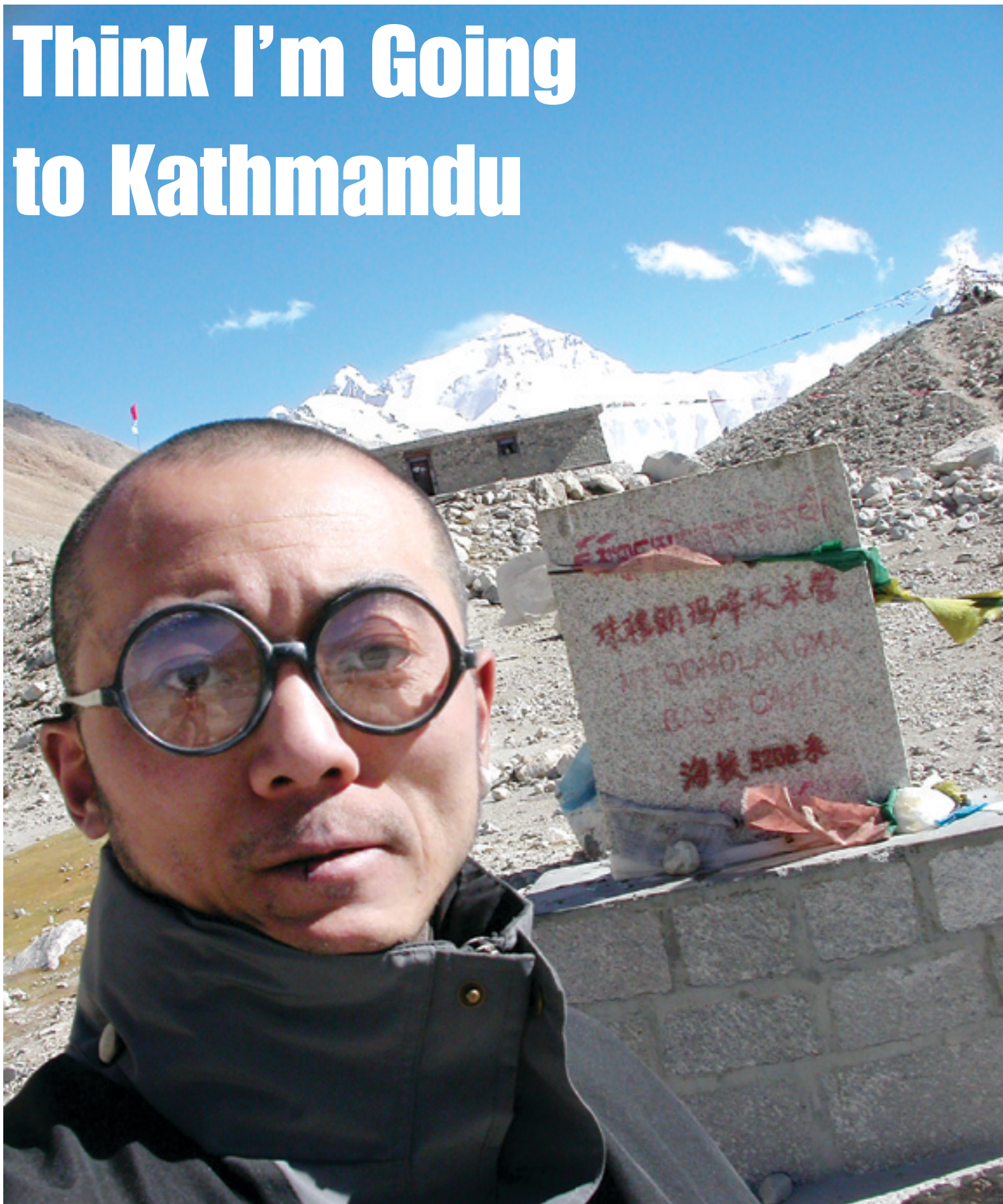
According to Wang Libiao, from 2000 to 2003, Xu Xuehai only organized one physical examination for them, and that was only after they had complained strongly and asked for a checkup. The result was that 71 of the 164 workers were diagnosed with mercury poisoning.

A female worker whose family name is Wang told *Beijing Today* that the factories seldom used the protection systems, since they wanted to save costs. Broken thermometers were scattered all over the plant without being cleaned away in time. According to a local newspaper report, small drops of mercury could be seen all over the grounds of the plant, and there were no safety measures being used when the reporter visited the factory.

Wang said she was now in poor health and her life was totally ruined. "I even have difficulty when I chew cucumber," she said. However, she said she was not going to fight for her legal rights since she needed the job to support her family.

A female worker whose family name is Wang told *Beijing Today* that the factories seldom used the protection systems, since they wanted to save costs. Broken thermometers were scattered all over the plant without being cleaned away in time.

Think I'm Going to Kathmandu



By Hester

Xiao Bian'er believes in traveling whatever the obstacles. He has travelled to some of the most remote parts of China, usually on a shoestring budget. But this man in his early thirties, with a weather-beaten face as evidence of his journeys, is no career backpacker. He's also the founder of Pass By Bar, an institution for discerning drinkers in Beijing.

Xiao Bian'er is not his real name, however. He used to wear a long pony tail reaching almost down to his waist. One morning he suddenly decided to have it cut off. Now Xiao Bian'er (which means pony tail in Chinese) is only a name by which people are reminded of the long hair he used to have.

Life-changing trip

As a child growing up by the side of a railway in Anshan, an industrial city in northeast China, Xiao Bian'er always felt curious about the lives of the passengers on the trains and he longed to see the world beyond.

His first big trip started soon after his graduation from Lu Xun Fine Arts College in Shenyang in 1996, as a research project to collect folk arts. As an art student, he always wanted to see the dramatic western areas of China. While his classmates went to museums and art galleries in big cities, he bought himself a big map of China, spread it on the floor, and picked Yunnan as his destination.

With 6,000 yuan earned from part-time jobs and 4,000 yuan collected from friends, he set out for Kunming, the capital of Yunnan Province. Xiao Bian'er still feels it was a strange decision. "I knew nothing at that time. It was a large sum of money for me, all in cash. So I tied a small bag across my belly and put all the money in."

Xiao Bian'er visited Xishuangbanna in the south of Yunnan, where he joined a touring group bound for Burma,



At "home" in the Pass By Bar

Photo by Yan

but he often went off on his own and was repeatedly chided by the tour guide for not following the rules. He decided never to travel with a tour group again. During his time in Yunnan, Xiao Bian'er submerged himself in the extraordinary lives and rich culture of the ethnic minority people there. Living in their homes, chatting and working with them, he experienced a life he had never imagined, with less hustle and bustle and competition and more calmness, smiling, and the smell of nature.

He stopped painting. "If I only draw the superficial and do not experience their lives, I'd rather quit," he said. Sometimes hitchhiking, sometimes walking and stopping along the way, Xiao Bian'er set out from Xishuangbanna for Sichuan. By the time he arrived in Chengdu, he was carrying seven or eight bags full of various small folk art items. In Chengdu he bought one large bag to put everything in. In the following eight years, he made several trips to the west of China carrying this bag. Though others prepare everything before setting out on a journey, Xiao Bian'er learned to do everything while already on the way. When talking about

his first trip, he still becomes excited. "It really set my heart free and forever changed my whole life."

Crawl to Ali if necessary

A year after graduating, Xiao Bian'er decided to go to Beijing. Doing some simple jobs there, he impatiently waited for a chance to start his next trip. He heard about an organised trip to Ali, a town in northern Tibet. Haunted by the thought of visiting this no man's land, he finally set off alone in 1998, equipped with the small sum of money he had saved from his various jobs.

He first took a train to Lanzhou, where he bought a bicycle and set out on the road to Lhasa. Just as he was coming to Erdaogou, a passing driver shouted, "You dropped something!" Turning around, Xiao Bian'er realized he had dropped his overcoat which had his ID card, credit card and all his cash in the pockets. He retraced his route, but he couldn't find the coat.

More misfortunes came after that. First his sleeping bag got cut, then he couldn't find anyone willing to give him a lift. He thought about how one day before he had praised the beauty of the dusk, but that now he was in no mood to enjoy the sunset. Still, he was determined to carry on with his trip. Finally he reached a construction site where an army engineering corps was working. An officer there managed to find him a small cotton padded coat covered with dirt and machine oil. Xiao Bian'er was delighted.

The next morning, refreshed with hot food and water, he was sent off by cheering soldiers and headed for Tuotuo River, the source of the Yellow River. Having nothing to prove his identity, he couldn't stay in military camps and had to spend the night in maintenance stations along the highway. Each station is ten to thirteen kilometres apart, and it became his only mission to reach the next station to spend the night. He barely managed to fill his stomach by begging in the maintenance stations along the road, and he craved for water, fruit and vegetables. Once, two sweet melon peels were thrown out of a passing bus, and he rushed forward on his bike and picked them up. Carefully scratching away the dirt with a small knife, he gnawed at the remains.

By seeking help from maintenance stations and barracks and collecting food from remains left by bus passengers on the highway, he finally made it to Lhasa. For several weeks he worked in the city as a plasterer while waiting for any transport that would take him to Ali. Soon he found himself on the way with 700

yuan earned from selling his bicycle and a whole box of hard bread. He arrived in Ali one month later.

"Today, whenever I think of that hard bread, I feel nausea," Xiao Bian'er smiles. The three-month trip in Tibet made him realize that the lack of money or time is no reason not to travel. "I would crawl to Ali if necessary," he says simply.

From Lhasa to Kathmandu

In September 2003, Xiao Bian'er set out on a new adventure. Covering more than 1,000 kilometres, including going up to the 5,000 metre Mount Everest Base Camp, no longer seemed difficult for Xiao Bian'er. Though he prepared enough money this time, he still wanted to ride a bicycle.

With the help of his friends, Xiao Bian'er went back to Lhasa, got himself a bicycle and set out towards Kathmandu. The journey was thrilling, especially when he descended from the icy world of 5,200 metres above sea level to the sub-tropical climate at 500 metres, where waterfalls cascaded from overhead above the road, giving passing vehicles an impromptu carwash and bike riders a total soaking.

Xiao Bian'er cycled across almost every variety of road on the journey: gravel roads which shook his arms nearly senseless; dirt roads, turning into mud in rains and throwing up thick dust on sunny days; and water-logged roads, which he actually quite enjoyed.

Xiao Bian'er's stay in Kathmandu was equally eventful. There was tension brewing between the government and militia forces when he arrived, and a curfew was imposed every night.

One day after spending all his money, he was roaming the streets and brooding on his fate when he suddenly heard someone call: "Xiao Bian'er, Xiao Bian'er!" he could hardly believe his ears. Raising his head, he saw his friends from Lhasa grinning at him from a restaurant window. He was able to rely on his friends for the rest of the month he stayed in Kathmandu. For Xiao Bian'er, it seems there is always a way out of difficulties.

Spiritual journey through the Pass By Bar

In the spring of 1999, passing by a small fruit stand on his bicycle in a small town in Gansu Province, Xiao Bian'er suddenly had an idea to open a bar. "For the guy selling fruit by the roadside, I am a total stranger and merely a passer-by, whom he will forget before long," he recollected.

Shortly after returning to Beijing, he began to preach his idea to his friends, but no one took it seriously. However, when he first mentioned it half-heartedly to his girl friend, now his wife Hai Yan'er in a text message, her response was quick and encouraging. She quit her job in a Swiss company and moved in with Xiao Bian'er to a small bungalow he rented in Nan Luogu Xiang and started the decoration with him.

"Better to die than to live without travelling!" Xiao Bian'er says, a belief further strengthened by two friends of his, a Frenchman and a Spanish man who were on their way to travel around the world empty handed. Shortly after Xiao Bian'er said goodbye to his two ambitious traveller friends, Pass By Bar appeared in the hutong and became the first gathering place in Beijing for his backpacker friends from around the world.

After SARS struck Beijing last year, Pass By never closed for a single day. Many foreigners, having no place to go, found a refuge there. Goodbye parties were held one after another. When Chinese people started to come back to Pass By after SARS had passed, Xiao Bian'er was moved to tears. Pass By stays in its own way like its owner. "At the beginning it was a bar, now it is our life style. In the future, we don't know..."

Riding a horse in Sichuan



River deep, mountain high...

Photos provided by Xiao Bian'er



By Sha Lin/Song Yin

"Lack of soul is the most deadly problem of Zhang Yimou," says well-known philosopher Bei Ye. His study focuses on philosophy and civilization of ancient Greece, and he feels that in contrast with the literature and art of ancient Greece, modern Chinese film lacks a deep comprehension of life. "As the leading sheep of Chinese film, Zhang Yimou cannot feel the warm, rich, and immense current of humanity that embraces all those dirty things. As a consequence, he has to pursue a kind of depressive and abnormal phenomena, presenting that as human nature itself. Showing off these is just to shock audience but not to carry forward the warm side of human nature. Based on that, he has failed to go deep into people's hearts."

"Though referred to as 'China's Steven Spielberg,' Zhang Yimou cannot reach Spielberg's level of humanism. We cannot expect Zhang to produce brilliant movies like *Schindler's List* or *Saving Private Ryan*. It is their huge emotive power that has kept Hollywood films in vogue all over the world for such a long time."

"To make a musical analogy, Zhang is neither Beethoven nor Wagner, who composed magnificent holy pieces, nor is he a Tchaikovsky or a Shostakovich with pathos and color, he's only a 'musician' mixing some buffoonery, some humor, some different styles to form weird pieces, then covering them with flamboyant overcoats."

The only two films of Zhang that Bei Ye approves are *To Live* and *My Father and Mother*. Bei considers both films touched the real tragedy of that certain period of time in China. "But he didn't continue in this way and cut his ties with the title of 'Master.' Zhang's dominant status is a tragedy for the Chinese film industry and is representative of the industry's overall weakness."

Facing his critics, Zhang once responded, "there are so many restrictions in filmmaking, what else can I choose to make? I have to make a living!" Bei considers this just an excuse, "Beauty is everywhere. For instance, the Japanese film *Sanshiro Sugata* shows abundant levels of human nature just through small potatoes and non-political bagatelles. The real artist has the ability to dis-

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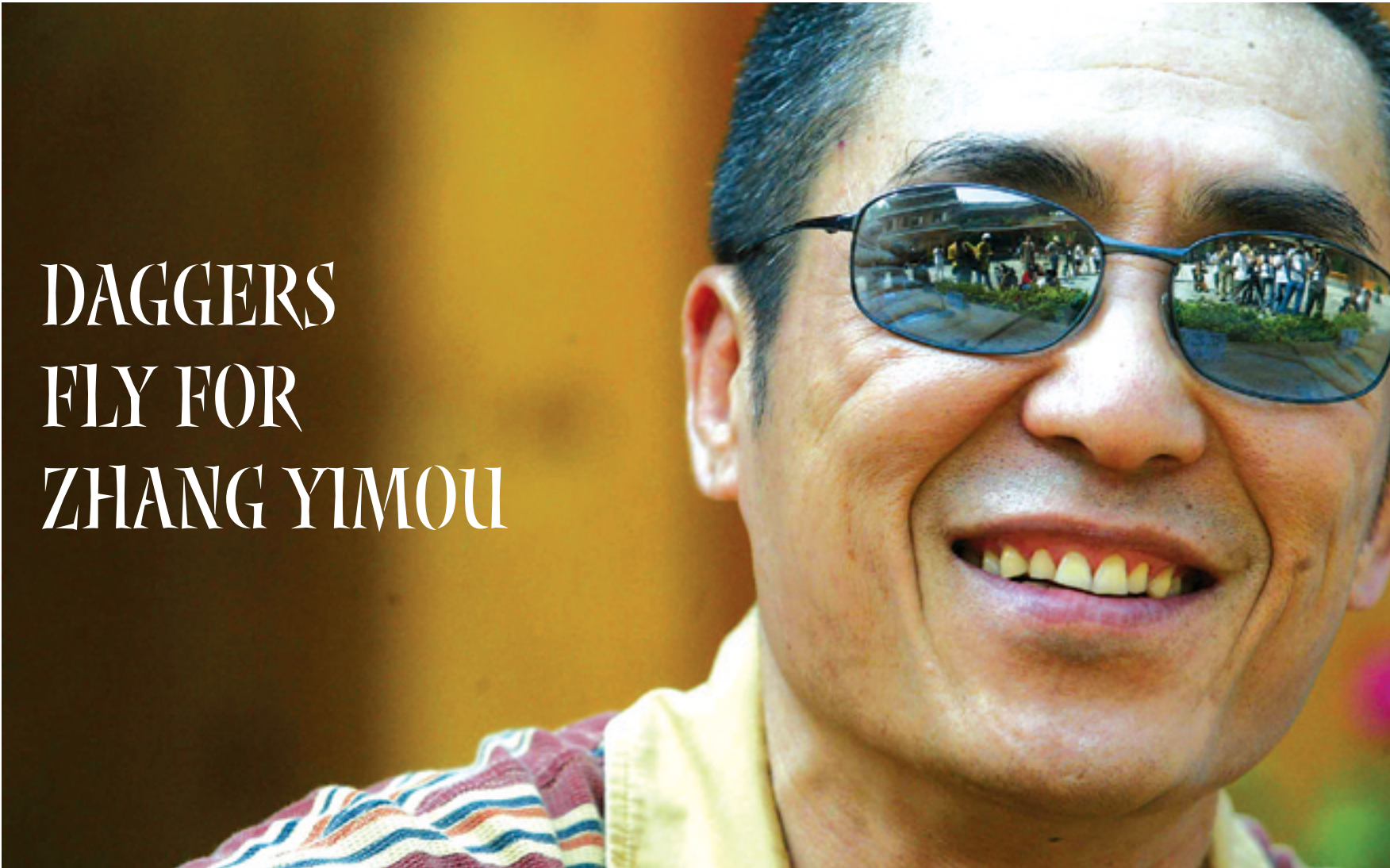
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DAGGERS FLY FOR ZHANG YIMOU



social criticism that hastened the birth of French New Wave movies and Italian Neo-realism movies in Italy," Zhang Yiwu said.

"Zhang even said, 'It doesn't matter what we shoot. What matters is how we shoot.'" Thereafter, he spent lots of money on planting flowers and making snow. But the audience sees nothing apart from the killing in the plain of flowers and the snow field, the dancing in the peony palace and the close-ups of flying daggers, bamboo arrows and all kinds of weapons."

"The defect of Zhang Yimou is neither commercial speculation nor imitation, but that his films have no powerful impact on people's soul, they are just finery and prettiness."

"This is a best time and also a worst time for China, in other words, a vital time for Chinese people and society. If Zhang is still coldly playing with his colors, he's got a problem with his artistic orientation," said Zhang Yiwu.

Staying away from politics

What most upsets Zhang's critics is the idea that a director

who has managed to sidestep some of the biggest events in modern China, has become such a shining star.

"I don't think an artist staying away from politics, instead, stressing personal characteristics and playing some modish skill will touch the essence of art," said Zhao Yu, a noted writer and TV director. "A real blockbuster should not only focus on its visual impact but also include an element of politics to add some courage and uprightness. The art films or commercial films lacking political background are always like a glass of lukewarm water."

"For example, in *Red Sorghum*, Zhang could make up fake folk songs and feature wild sex in a field of sorghum, but when he is confronted with the war against Japanese Aggression, apart from showing some bloody scenes, he is unable to depict even one serious battle in the background. All he can do is play some folk music, some kids' folk rhymes, show a solar eclipse and colors," Zhao said.

Film and TV critic He Dong ar-

gues that Zhang Yimou's movies are always about clandestine love affairs. From *Red Sorghum* and *Ju Dou to Raise the Red Lantern*, the heroines are always living in a repressive and unhealthy atmosphere, in a home without love, and pay dearly when she dares to leave. "I cannot understand why the director chooses such absurd stories every time. Putting all these movies together, I can sense a profound disdain toward women."

Xie Xizhang, drama critic for *Beijing Evening News*, points out that the two main themes in Zhang's movies are folk-customs and sexual inhibitions. These became his trump cards for success in Western countries in the early years. But merely the depiction of sexual inhibition and its release can never equate with humanity.

No foreigners, no Zhang Yimou

"His philosophy is pragmatism," Zhang Yiwu summarized. "The fame in China of Zhang Yimou's earliest films was due to their winning baskets of international awards. But this just becomes a joke that now more

and more people criticize Zhang Yimou for worshipping all things foreign and fawning on foreign countries."

According to Wang Yichuan, a professor at Beijing Normal University and author of the book *The End of the Zhang Yimou Legend*, it is very simple "If there were no Westerners, Zhang Yimou would not be where he is today. In Zhang Yimou's fable, 'China' is redolent with a hazy or bizarre exotic atmosphere, which, because of its simplicity, can be understood and appreciated by western audiences. The more the Western audiences dwell upon the Chinese 'lack of civilization,' the more their Western-centric sense is reinforced."

However, Wang insists, "Zhang's legend won't go on. He received a prize in the beginning because he went there to ask for it, and those Westerners were willing to give - that's it. But now, the 'willingness' no longer exists. All the games have a rule. When your film is not good enough, the game is over, and the Westerners will go to find someone else to provide an 'exotic atmosphere.'"

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What's on DVD

By Sabu



Women's Private Parts

Bold and audacious, *Women's Private Parts* is a documentary directed by Hong Kong director Barbara Wong Chun Chun, focusing on the private lives of modern Chinese women. Shot on video in Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Beijing, it was named Best International Feature Film at the 2001 New York Independent Film Festival. DVD 5, Cantonese with English and Chinese Subtitles.



The Wedding Banquet

This 1993 international hit by Ang Lee is the second in his "Father Knows Best" trilogy, coming in between *Punishing Hands* and *Eat Drink Man Woman*. A funny and poignant story, it won the Golden Bear Award at the 1993 Berlin Film Festival. DVD 9, mandarin with English, Spanish, French and Chinese subtitles. Special features include an interview with the director.



Wild Strawberries

This 1957 film that catapulted Ingmar Bergman to the forefront of world cinema explores the disillusionment of an elderly physician, Professor Isak Borg, as he reflects upon his life and begins to perceive his mortality. DVD 5, English soundtrack and audio commentary with English and Chinese subtitles.



Folk Concert to Protect an Endangered Heritage

By Song Yin

There is a kind of voice
Once brilliantly blossomed
Now disappearing little by little
There is a kind of feeling
Once gestated rich fruits
Now fading from our memory



This Sunday and Monday, a concert of Chinese folk songs was held at the amphitheater of the Beijing Exhibition Center.

Folk performers from more than 20 ethnic minority areas around the nation took the stage for the free event, which was aimed at helping to protect and carry forward Chinese folk art.

The 60-odd performers came from various ethnic groups, including Tibetan, Korean, Mongolian, Kazak, Dai, Bai, Yi, Hui, Tujia, Miao, Zhuang, Dong, Tatar, Uygur as well as Han.

They sang loudly and clearly, about love, labor and anything beautiful in their everyday life. Their music, without any formal or scientific standard, is unique and irreplaceable.

The audience of several thousand attending the concert were unanimous in their applause, which resounded throughout the hall.

Rock Review

Hip-Hop with Clean Bomb

By Wang Yao

Shanghai based hip-hop band Hei Bang (Hi-Bomb) hit Beijing with their first album *Xi Ha Di Yi Bang (The best hip-hop)* this July, on EMI's Busheng label.

The band features two MCs, Xiao Shizi and Shang Hao. Xiao Shizi returned to China from the US, where he saw the hip-hop light, three years ago. Shang Hao has been part of Shanghai's hip-hop scene for several years, and already had a considerable following there before joining Hei Bang.

Perhaps out of pragmatism and a desire to get radio airplay, Hei Bang's lyrics are devoid of "bad language." According to the band, they want to reflect their culture and attitude to social phenomena with songs about life and family.

The two MCs switch fluently between rapping in Chinese and English, especially in the *Xi Ha Bu Duan (Hip-hop Forever)* and *Yi La Ke Jin Zhang Ju Shi (Iraqi Strenuous State)*. In songs like *Xiafei Lu 87 Hao (Xiafei Street No. 87)*, showing a nostalgia for the old Shanghai and the sim-



plicity of childhood, their lyrics are frank and humorous. *San Le (Broken up)* and *Fei Dianxing Nii You (Untypical Girlfriend)* sees the band combining various popular music styles, beyond simply hip-hop.

WORLDWIDE



"Moon men"

Jay-Z and OutKast Dominate MTV Awards

Rappers Jay-Z and OutKast walked away with the most MTV Video Music Awards on Sunday with four "Moon men" each as the music television network took its annual awards show out of New York or Los Angeles for the first time.

The venue at Miami's American Airlines Arena allowed stars from singers Usher to movie stars like Bruce Willis to pull up to the red carpet in growling speed boats, sleek yachts and even a thundering airboat.

Australian rockers Jet, who recently completed a sell-out tour of the US, won Best Rock Video for their hit *Are You Going to Be My Girl*, from their debut album *Get Born*.

(Reuters)



Rosario Dawson

Rosario Dawson Arrested Near GOP Protests

Actress Rosario Dawson (Kids and Shattered Glass) was arrested near the route of anti-Republican protests after she refused to get off the road, authorities said Monday.

Dawson, 25, of Los Angeles, was filming a movie called *This Revolution*, according to published reports. She was taken into custody at midday Sunday about a block from the site of the Republican National Convention in Madison Square Garden, authorities said.

According to the criminal complaint, Dawson was spotted in a road with about 30 people gathered around them. A police officer told her that she had to leave the roadway,

but she reportedly refused. She was charged with two counts of disorderly conduct and one charge of obstructing governmental administration. They were released without bail and told to return to court November 9.

(AP)

Beckhams expecting third child

David Beckham's pop-star wife Victoria is pregnant with her third child, the pair announced Sunday.



Victoria Beckham

The couple said they were "delighted" with the news. The baby is due in March. "This is fantastic news. We are both absolutely delighted. We are planning to have the baby in Spain," they said in a statement.

The England captain and Real Madrid midfielder revealed earlier this month that his wife Victoria and two sons Brooklyn and Romeo had finally made the move from England to live with him in the Spanish capital.

Beckham moved from Manchester United to Madrid in July 2003 while his family remained in England. The marriage hit a rocky patch earlier this year after reports the football star had an affair with his former personal assistant, Rebecca Loos, who went on to tell her story to the media. (AFP)

Singer Wilson Garners CMA Nominations

Newcomer Gretchen Wilson garnered high-profile nominations from the Country Music Association Monday, including best album for her tribute to redneck pride, *Here for the Party*.



Gretchen Wilson

The other best album nominees were established acts: Brad Paisley for *Mud on the Tires*, Brooks and Dunn for *Red Dirt Road*, Toby Keith for *Shock'N Y'all* and Kenny Chesney for *When the Sun Goes Down*.

Keith also was nominated for male vocalist of the year and entertainer of the year; Chesney for male vocalist and entertainer of the year; and Brooks and Dunn for entertainer of the year. CBS will broadcast the 38th annual CMA awards show, hosted by Brooks and Dunn, live from Nashville's Grand Ole Opry House on November 9. (AP)

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By Xie Lixue

Years ago, the term *haigui* was a common expression to describe Chinese who returned from studying overseas, generally to very positive prospects. As the domestic market became more competitive, that term morphed into *haidai*, implying that many returnees were struggling to find work.

While both terms are still thrown around today, there are plenty of positive indicators that there are many jobs out there just waiting to be filled the right people from learning abroad.

Wanted: returned students

Around 170,000 Chinese who studied abroad have returned to China since the 1980s, according to statistics presented at a June 12 seminar in Paris.

They are particularly present in China's education field, where 77 percent of university presidents, 62 percent of post-graduate tutors and 71 percent of the directors of research bases have studied abroad.

"There are many options for people returned from studying overseas to find good jobs," said Cheng Jiakai, director of the Education Service Center China (ESCC), an organization that assists Chinese students in studying abroad and returning. "Some recruiters are looking for returned students for management positions with annual salaries of 80,000 yuan."

More than 1,800 job vacancies targeted at such people opened in Beijing in the first half of this year, according to information from the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Statistics. The jobs available to

Opportunities Abound for Returned Students



More than 700,000 Chinese studied abroad in more than 100 countries and regions between 1978 and 2003, according to statistics issued by the Ministry of Education earlier this year. Around one-quarter of those people have returned to China and started successful careers.

Photo by Photocom

returnees included university teacher and professor positions and work as technical experts, managers in large corporations, lawyers and editors.

Getting satisfaction

Despite the abundance of opportunities, some returnees

from overseas studies still struggle to find work and express confusion about the paths to securing satisfying employment.

"Usually, there are three routes for finding a job: job fairs, recruitment websites and headhunters," said Joyce Hu, a consultant in the marketing de-

partment at famed headhunting agency China Career.

Hu said that around 70 to 80 percent of Chinese returned from studying abroad preferred to seek employment through headhunters because they worked quickly and offered well-designed programs

and services.

"Demand is highest for returned students who had work experience in China before they headed abroad," Hu told *Beijing Today*. "They can easily find jobs in the real estate, computer science and IT industries."

Huang Jian, manager of CI-ASE Management Consultation Company, another headhunting firm, said, "Some returned students feel there is a lack of opportunities in the domestic market because some companies rely on internal recommendations to fill positions."

Based on his own experience, Huang said domestic companies really needed the expertise, knowledge and multicultural experiences returned students had to offer.

Tale of success

Xin Yu got his bachelor's degree from Beijing University and then headed to the United States to study with limited domestic work experience. He returned in 2002 after six years in the US with a master's degree in international relations and a MBA.

Within months, he found a job, but resigned after less than a year because he was not satisfied. With a little more hunting, he secured a good position as assistant to the deputy general manager at Fesco Insurance Brokerage, where he still works.

"I had little experience, but I could adapt to new surroundings and establish a new network. I basically just started over when I got back," Xin told *Beijing Today*, revealing the secrets to his success.

Jobs

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Send your CV by fax to: 8408 0185, or email to: hymt_job@hymt.com.cn

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(You are welcome to send classified info to: ayi@ynet.com. Beijing Today does not take any responsibility for the accuracy and authenticity of the information published.)

Corporate HR:

Sony: Succeed with Your Creative Dreams

By Xie Lixue

On August 27, Ms. Zhang Yanmei, vice president of Sony (China) Ltd.'s Human Resource Development Division, accepted an interview with *Beijing Today* to talk about the company's culture and recruitment policies.

Beijing Today: Please describe the corporate culture at Sony China.

Zhang Yanmei: In Sony China, innovation and creation are the most important factors throughout operation and management. We are aware that globalization is an issue on the minds of all employees.

In order to broaden their horizons, our company provides employees with many options and venues for information, such as the resources of the company's internal Internet network and our internal periodical *Sony Commu-*



Zhang Yanmei, vice president of Sony China's HR division

Photo by Sony China

nication.

BT: How do you test applicants' abilities during interviews? What questions do interview panels normally raise?

Zhang: We look at their work and personal experiences and career ambitions as a way to predict their potential.

For example, we usually ask appli-

cants for engineer positions if they had a habit of taking complex things apart and then assembling them again when they were young, or if they like do-it-yourself activities. Through such questions, we can deduce if they have strong senses of curiosity, a personality trait that is a must in a good engineer.

BT: Are there any special recruitment programs for recent university graduates? What percentage of the company's workforce are recent graduates?

Zhang: A recruitment program for university students called Sony Overseas Engineer Recruitment began in 2000.

In the past four years, about 135 IT graduates were selected from more than 10,000 candidates and became members of the company. They are still active in our headquarters and pro-

duction and research and development departments.

Among them, over 50 percent finished their master's studies before entering, and as they accumulated practical management and operation experience, some have shot up over others and participated in many important tasks either in research and development, of such products as the best-selling DCR-PC105E digital video recorder, or in international cooperation programs.

BT: What are the career prospects of Sony employees? Can you offer some advice to people interested in joining Sony?

Zhang: A common phrase within the company is: 'Do you dream in Sony?'

A crucial thing when deciding where to work is to understand a company's environment, to ascertain its merits and shortcomings, and then to decide if that environment suits your development plan. Sony is an excellent place for people who are creative, independent learners and serious about getting a global career.

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BEIJING TODAY
今日北京

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Top Learning in New Zealand's Top City

The University of Auckland, which lies in the heart of the city of Auckland, is the largest research institution in New Zealand.

"Our university is the most comprehensive university in New Zealand in terms of its wide range of disciplines and professional courses," said Dr. Chris Tremewan, pro vice-chancellor (international) of the University of Auckland in the *Study Abroad Salon* this Monday.

The fifth guest in Focus on New Zealand, Dr. Tremewan gave readers a detailed and vivid picture of the University of Auckland through his informative answers.

University basics:

What part of Auckland is your university located in? What is the surrounding environment like? Is the traffic convenient?

— blue ocean

Auckland, a harbor city much like Sydney, Seattle and Vancouver, is a modern cosmopolitan city of 1.2 million people, where The University of Auckland, as a world-class research-led university, has an honored place and plays an active role in the life of the city.

The university is served by frequent public transport. There are many restaurants and cultural amenities around the university – including very good Chinese restaurants.

What is the official ranking of the University of Auckland?

— white clothes

Earlier this year New Zealand's Tertiary Education Commission completed its first ever Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF) assessment, and the University of Auckland was ranked as New Zealand's top research university.

Compared with the other seven universities in New Zealand, what do you think are the advantages of your university?

— telephone

We have eight faculties under which the comprehensive range of disciplines taught to PhD level are grouped: arts, business and economics, creative arts and industries, engineering, law, medical and health sciences, science and theology.

In addition, we host four of New Zealand's seven Centers of Research Excellence. These are in the areas of

mathematics, molecular biodiscovery, growth and development and Maori development.

Joint programs:

Do you have any joint programs or relationships with Chinese universities?

— plane

We are closely linked with Beijing University and Fudan University through the Universitas 21 Network.

Through the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU), we are in partnership with Tsinghua University, Beijing University, Fudan University, Zhejiang University, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and University of Science and Technology of China.

Application:

How many semesters does the University of Auckland have each year? What are the admission application dates?

— passat

Semester dates 2005:
Summer school January 6 - February 10
First semester February 28 - June 25
Second semester July 18 - November 12
Application dates:
General closing dates:
December 1 for summer

school

December 8 for first semester
May 31 for second semester
Some programs have earlier closing dates.

Can you list some channels for studying, applying and consulting for postgraduate studies?

— gorilla

For advice on making an application you can go to one of our agents in China. You can find the agents on our website.

The New Zealand Trade and Enterprise Office at the New Zealand Embassy in Beijing can also provide you with information on the university's programs.

If you want to seek academic advice on particular subject areas please go through the International Office: international@auckland.ac.nz.

For on-line applications, go to www.auckland.ac.nz/nDeva.

Chinese students on campus:

How many Chinese students are studying in your school at present?

— rabbitear

graduate program in Russia and returned to China. I am planning to take post-graduate courses in France, if possible. I have studied French in Russia for two years, so I want to take the TEF examination directly. Can you give some information about TEF, for example, where and when to sign up and the score requirements?

— adwina912

A: For the time and place to sign up, you can check the website: www.cela

There are approximately 2,500 international students from China at the University of Auckland. There are about 5,400 international students from more than 100 countries. We have about 35,000 students in total.

Are there any organizations and gatherings of Chinese students?

— monkeyking

We have an International Students Activities Program to organize activities for new international students and to encourage the integration of our international students with local students.

Chinese students are also interested in social clubs and support groups. Organizations such as the New Zealand Chinese Students Association and the Kiwi Asian Club help our Chinese students to integrate into the university community and into New Zealand as a whole.

Study and life:

What kinds of recreation facilities are there in your university?

— playgirl

There are excellent gymnasiums on campus and many student clubs including sports and recreation clubs. The university's recreational facilities are very cheap for registered students.

What services are offered on campus to assist international students?

— playgirl

There are a number of services on campus to assist you. These include:

Pastoral care:

- Chaplaincy service with Chinese speaking staff
- Student Learning Center for academic support
- Student health and counseling

Can your university arrange home-stays for international students? Is it possible to live with immigrant families? Do you think that is a good idea?

— forum

The university will assist in arranging accommodation if you contact the University Accommodation Service (www.auckland.ac.nz/accommodation; email: accom@auckland.ac.nz). They can provide home-stay with any type of family.

I'd say that it is probably better to stay with a New Zealand family rather than a recent migrant family if you want to get to know New Zealand well.

(Edited by Zhang Nan)

cn.org. Score requirements vary according to different majors. Generally, according to information from Education, your score should above 150 to go to France to study. Studying subjects like literature or law requires relatively higher language levels. Also, to enroll directly in subject courses without having one-year language courses first, students of science should have scores above 400 and students of arts will need scores of 400 to 600.

Make Friends in Massey

Massey University, founded in 1927 in Palmerston North, New Zealand as an agricultural public university, has a proud 77-year history of educational excellence.

The university provides international students access to a wide range of programs and a diverse student body that includes Maori, or native New Zealand, students.

While chatting with our readers this Monday, Professor John Raine, deputy vice-chancellor (Auckland) for Massey University, described international students' lives and how they interact with local classmates and neighbors.



John Raine

Strengths and programs:

Compared with the seven other universities in New Zealand, what do you think are the advantages of Massey University?

— terrif

Massey University has three campuses in Auckland, Wellington and Palmerston North as well as its leading extramural (distance education) program.

Which subjects or majors are the strongest at your university?

— California

Massey has diverse programs ranging across the sciences, engineering and technology, humanities and social sciences, education, business, design fine arts and music.

We have particular strengths in the mathematical and information sciences, biological sciences in particular molecular biology, the social sciences, business and design.

As far as I know, Massey University started as an agricultural university. Is Massey famous for agricultural science?

— rabbitear

Massey University is famous for land-based sciences including veterinary sciences and horticultural sciences, and is well known for agricultural sciences.

Massey University has a reputation for its aviation program, its College of Design Fine Arts and Music and New Zealand's largest business school.

Do you have relationships or joint programs with any Chinese universities?

— Mercedes

Massey has relationships with Gansu Grassland Eco, Guizhou University, Civil Aviation Flying College of Guangzhou, Shanghai CIIC Education International, Dalian Advanced Arts School, Nanjing Forestry University and Huazhong Agricultural University.



ty. The teaching of Massey University business degrees is currently in the final stages of implementation at Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Internships:

What kind of internships does Massey University provide students, especially international students? Do you think internships are very important?

— ducktail

Massey has industry internships for its engineering students each summer as a requirement for the degree course. Internships are also appearing in business courses and others.

Tuition fees:

What are tuition fees like for international students? Can you give an average number?

— greentea

Full information on fees is available under the international section of our website, www.massey.ac.nz.

Campus life:

It seems that every university in New Zealand has Maori students. How many Maori students are studying in your university? Is it easy for international students to get along with them? What are the religious beliefs of the Maori?

— maorigirl

Massey University has the highest number of Maori students of any New Zealand university.

In 2003, 10 percent of our total roll by head count was Maori students, four percent (1,533) on campus and six percent (2,404) extramural.

It is very easy for international students to get along with them. Previous international students have enjoyed their contact with Maori students and learning about their culture. Many of them are of Christian faith.

What kind of accommodation does your university provide international students? Do international students have to cook themselves?

— batman

Massey University provides both fully-catered hostel accommodation and self-catering apartments.

The catered hostel accommodation cost around NZ\$157 per week and the self-catering apartments around \$130 per week. Some international students choose to cook themselves.

The University also offers home-stay accommodation from around \$170 per week, where the student stays with a New Zealand family. This normally includes food and laundry.

What is the security situation on the Massey University campus? What measures have you adopted to protect students, especially international students?

— blueocean

The safety of our students is paramount and we take this very seriously to ensure that we exceed the requirements of the New Zealand Ministry of Education Code of Practice for the pastoral care of international students. All the campuses have security staff present 24 hours a day.

(Edited by Zhang Nan)

Notice

Focus on New Zealand will invite the International Director for University of Otago, Dr. Roberto Rabel, to Beijing Today's *Study Abroad Salon* next Monday.

You are welcome to log in to our website at: <http://bjtoday.ynet.com>; or ask questions by first emailing to the host, Ayi, at: ayi@ynet.com.

Time: 1-2 pm, Monday, September 6

通知

下周一，奥塔古大学国际部主任，Roberto Rabel博士将做客“留学聊天室”之“新西兰之夏”，通过网络与大家进行直接交流。

欢迎大家届时登陆我们的网站：<http://bjtoday.ynet.com>，留下你们的问题。也可以把问题发送到主持人阿义的信箱中，由他帮您提问：ayi@ynet.com。

时间：周一（9月6日），下午1点到2点

Ask Ayi:

Q: I am planning to study in France next year. Are students allowed to transfer from one school to another there? Would academic credits be accepted by the new school and be transferred?

— skywalkerzwj

A: Yes, you can transfer from one school to another and your course credits will be transferred.

Q: I have just finished my under-



Lunch at Lush

Photos by Li Shuzhuan and Yu Shanshan

By Lv Pinrou

The Wudaokou area of Haidian District has always been a student hub as it stands near a cluster of several of Beijing's top universities. Of late, the area has taken on the real feel of a college town, with cool student-oriented hangouts cropping up all over the place.

Primarily responsible for this evolution is the Huaqing Jiayuan compound, a sprawling apartment complex home to many local foreign students that offers everything a young bohemian could want, from cheap eats to groovy cafes, small bars to full-on clubs with live music. And thanks to the Beijing's first light rail track, which passes just next door, this fun part of town is no longer just convenient to nearby dorm dwellers.

A Huaqing Jiayuan standout is **Cava Coffee**, a hip cafe designed to have an other-worldly feel inspired by the novel *Invisible City* by Italo Calvino. It sounds unlikely, but the place pulls it off and certainly stands apart from mushrooming corporate coffee options.

All the coffee is brewed and sold within two weeks of roasting for optimum flavor, yet prices are quite reasonable. Big cups of rich Colombian, Brazilian Santes or Ethiopian Mocho go for



Cava Coffee corner

22 yuan each. For a different kind of buzz, patrons can dip into the impressive beer menu, which includes such potent Belgian brews as the Trappist ale Chimay (50 yuan) and smooth Duvel (45 yuan).

Cava Coffee's food options reveal Thai influence, especially in that cuisine's mix of sour, spicy and sweet, with some creative touches. A house favorite is the qiandao longfeng juan (38 yuan), diced shrimp rolled in crisp bacon for a sinfully

tasty treat. A less greasy choice is the pomelo salad, a sharp, citrusy Thai specialty that fetches 25 yuan.

Where: Huaqing Jiayuan, Wudaokou, Haidian **Open:** 10 am - 2 am **Average cost:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 8286 7297

The bar/club/cafe **Lush** may strike many foreign students as having almost been flown in from their familiar college towns overseas. With its dingy-funky atmosphere, banged-up, simple furniture, handwritten blackboard signs and great music, it has everything a good college bar should have – and more.

The fact Lush was set up by an American and a New Zealander goes a long way to explaining why it



Lush's pita bread platter, 30 yuan

is so true to college bar form. Yet they've gone some extra steps, like putting together an attractive menu of western food, intended to give a "home away from home" feel. The eating options are not extensive, but there is more than enough to satisfy diners looking for a small snack or a complete meal, and most items fall in the reasonable 20 to 30 yuan range.

The homemade focaccia, warmed and served with a plate of balsamic vinegar, olive oil and cracked black pepper, qualifies as one of Beijing's better 10 yuan snack options. Great bread is also a key ingredient in Lush's sandwiches, which are given a tangy zing thanks to swaths of a secret apricot sauce. The popular salads are made in "real American" style – think big. Cholesterol-loaded American-style breakfasts, just the thing to kill a hangover, are served all day long. Top it off with an additively sweet scoop of ice cream in a cookie crust.

Of course there is also plenty to drink, from booze to coffee to juices and soothing smoothies, all of solid quality. Even the base smoothie model, a mixture of yogurt and banana, is heads above most local competition.

Neighboring a popular bookstore, Lush is a great place to pull up for an afternoon coffee and chill session. On a sunny Sunday afternoon, the background music was of the quality rarely heard anywhere in this city, rocking and righteous and just loud enough to enjoy while not prohibiting conversation.

The club's nightly specials up the volume and tend to pack the place out. Sundays are open mike nights, Tuesdays are for Latin music and dance lessons, and weekends DJ sessions bring out the party people.

Where: Huaqing Jiayuan **Open:** 8 am - late (24 hours Thursday to Sunday) **Average cost:** 25 yuan **Tel:** 8286 3566

Just around the corner from Lush stands the hot two-storey lounge and club **Propaganda**. The top floor is meant for chilling and chatting, while the first floor is for dancing to booming hip hop, drawing hordes of club kids foreign and native.

The bar serves more than the predictable selection of booze with choices like the "propaganda" cocktail, a blue drink served aflame and priced at 35 yuan. Packs of parties can bend elbows with the 18 BRW (110 yuan), a set of 18 test tubes filled with different colored concoctions made of vodka, Malibu, Blue bols and more.

Where: Huaqing Jiayuan **Open:** 9 pm - late **Average cost:** 40 yuan **Tel:** 8286 3679

Another popular nightlife spot is **Platform**, which works a train station motif with service staff in rail-inspired outfits and related curios on the walls. In keeping with the theme, the pride of the bar is its version of the classic brain-busting cocktail the "stop light", which is sweet and booze-laden and priced at only 20 yuan. Such low prices are par for the course at Platform, which takes things further to draw thirsty students with drink specials every night of the week. Fridays are for serious inebriation, with tequila and vodka shots going for only 15 yuan a pop. Next stop, drunkville.

Where: Huaqing Jiayuan **Open:** 8 pm - 4 am **Average cost:** 20 yuan **Tel:** 8286 3686

For a different kind of Wudaokou experience, head east from Huaqing Jiaquan under the light rail station and turn north up Daxue Lu, home to a strip of bustling small Korean restaurants. Authenticity is a good bet, as these eateries are aimed squarely at the many Korean students in the area and Chinese characters on signs are few and far between.

The **Taibai Shanmai** (Mountains of Taibai) restaurant may not be the coolest on the row, but it has earned a reputation for quality of food that has allowed it to survive, prosper and develop a veritable following despite its hidden location.



Pork sausage (shun chang), 20 yuan

A pride of the kitchen is the *qianggu tudou tang*, a thick soup made from potatoes and bones. It may sound simple, but it is very carefully cooked to draw out the bones' flavor without being heavy on fat and gets natural thickening from the potatoes. A topping of sesame seeds and fragrant *suzi* leaves add contrasting, enriching flavors. The price of a medium-sized serving, enough to feed two, is 38 yuan.

Another dish hard to find at most other Korean joints is the *lazheng ankangyu* (60 yuan), or spicy steamed anglerfish. The fish is first stir-fried and then steamed with piquant Korean-style sauce and bean sprouts, and is said to have near magical cold-curative powers.

Like most Korean restaurants, Taibai Shanmai provides customers with a revolving selection of free small starters. Fortunately, the excellent pickled radish is served every day.

Where: Daxue Lu, Wudaokou, Haidian **Open:** 10:30 am - 5 am **Average cost:** 25 yuan **Tel:** 6232 3455

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One bedroom apartment, 70 square meters, in Mega Hall for rent. Wooden floor, nice furniture & deco, full home appliance, 24 hr hot water, security, underground parking, satellite TV and broadband Internet available. 7th floor, good view lake-facing. Convenient traffic, near Dongzhimen subway station. Contact: Ms. Dong, 5867 6025, 13161023781

Language Exchange

A Chinese teacher and her husband, a Chinese history teacher, fond of traveling are looking for a person whose mother tongue is English. We want to exchange language learning and make friends. Email: ygzxty@yahoo.com.cn or ygzxty@hotmail.com

Shining, female, 23, Beijinger, bachelor of electronic engineering, would like to help foreigners know more about the culture of Beijing. Contact: xiaonan1919@sohu.com

Yang, 28, holder of bachelor's degree in management, is working hard in English and seeking a native English speaker for language exchange. Email: cpa008@yahoo.com.cn

Jane, a Beijing female editor with literature and language bachelor degree, hopes to meet a native English speaker who wants to learn Chinese. Her email: yuanjane789@yahoo.com.cn

Kathy, 24, a warmhearted and honest girl, nicknamed "happy bird" by friends, is looking for language exchange partners. I enjoy folk dancing and singing. Eager to improve oral English. Contact: clever369@yahoo.com.cn

Personals

Professional Chinese young lady who has over five years teaching experience would like to be a Chinese tutor to share the essence of Chinese language and Chinese culture with foreign friends. Contact: 13910535609, email: zhangjessica72@hotmail.com

Shining would like to work for a foreign family, for instance taking care of a child or doing housework. If you are interested, email her: xiaonan1919@sohu.com

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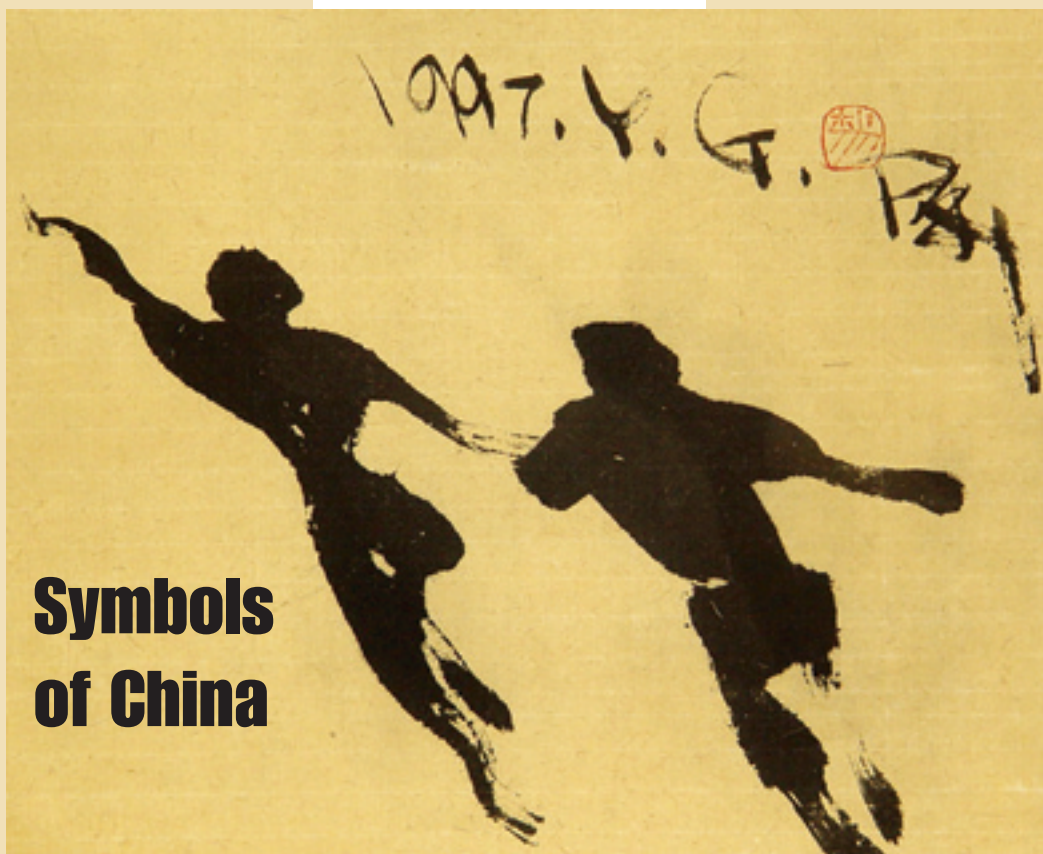
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Exhibitions

Modern Oils of Pang Yongjie

Using fluent technique, big blocks of color and a traditional understanding of character to create portraits of human nature and the soul, Pang's conceptual works expose Beijing's inner world with directness and courage.

Where: Qin Gallery, 1-1E Huaweili Enjoy paradise, Chaoyang **When:** till September 15, 9:30 am - 7:00 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0461



In this collection of works, artists use symbols to represent themselves and a larger national spirit through traditional Chinese images.

Where: Creation Art Gallery, north end of Ritan Donglu **When:** till September 17, 10 am - 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8561 7570



Record of a Journey to the East - Solo Show of Sebastian Heiner

This solo exhibition highlights abstract oils painted by contemporary German artist Sebastian Heiner. Heiner came to Beijing from Berlin this April to know and understand an unfamiliar culture and has since used his paintings to express his new knowledge. The intuitive paintings show he has found freedom within a different culture.

Where: Arts Seasons Gallery, Dashanzi Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** Tuesdays through Sundays till September 30, 11 am - 7 pm, or by appointment **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6431 1900

Realist Pen Drawings

Artist Yang Yutang imbues his pen drawings with unique charm that gives them a high standing and allows him to creatively challenge the masters of modern art.

Where: China National Museum of Fine Arts, 1 Wusi Dajie, Dongcheng **When:** September 5-10 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6401 7076

Anna Bella Geiger Retrospective

The Red Gate Gallery will hold a retrospective exhibition of the art career of Anna Bella Geiger, including her latest creations with a contemporary vanguard style.

Where: Red Gate Gallery, Dongbianmen Watchtower, Chongwen **When:** September 4-12, 10 am - 5 pm daily **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6525 1005

Movies



House of Flying Daggers (Shimian Maifu)

Directed by Zhang Yimou and starring Takashi Kaneshivo, Andy Lau, Zhang Ziyi and Song Dandan. Jin, a handsome soldier, and Mei, a beautiful revolutionary, embark on a journey while engaging in heroic martial arts battles and facing betrayals as well as their own burgeoning love. This movie is set in the Tang Dynasty and is based on intrigues to kill the emperor. (In English)

Where: Cherry Lane Movie Theater, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** Tonight and Saturday, 8 pm **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 13501251303

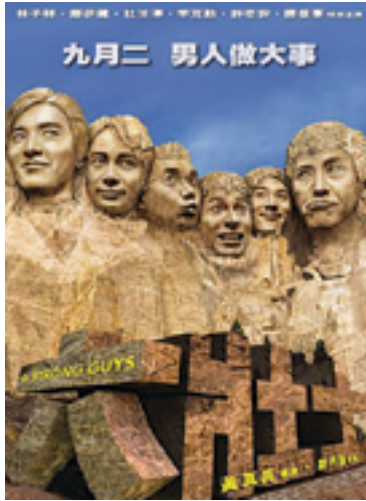


The Orphan of Anyang (Anyang De Gu'er)

Directed by Wang Chao and Zhang Xi, starring Zhu Jie, Sun Guilin, Yue Senyi and Liu Tianho. In provincial China, factory worker Yu Dagang has just lost his job. While eating at a noodle stand, the owner shows him a young baby who's been left there by her mother. The baby bears a note offering a monthly salary to anyone willing to look after the child. Yu decides to take the job and calls up the mother, a young prostitute named Feng Yanli. Over the next few months, Yu adapts well to his new responsibilities and soon Feng has moved into his apartment, forming a makeshift family. But the trio is threatened by Side, a dying gangster who tries to kidnap their child... (in Chinese with

French subtitles)

Where: B2M bar **When:** September 8, 8 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6426 1091



Six Strong Guys (Liuzhuangshi)

Directed by Barbara Wong, starring Hacken Lee, Andy Hui, Ekin Cheng, George Lam, Chapman To and Karena Lam. The night of a full moon, four urban professionals gather at the top floor of a prestigious office tower, planning to jump off the building. They agree to give themselves three hours to take care of unfinished business and then meet again at the same place for the final act. The unexpected events that follow, however, ensure things will not go as planned.

Where: UME International Cineplex, (Huaxing Guoji Yingcheng), 44 Shuangyushu Kexueyuan, Haidian **When:** opened September 2 **Tel:** 6261 2851

Activities

BJ Hikers - Pinnacle Tower

This walk starts in a valley and follows a mountain trail up to the Great Wall, where we will shift to a nice path running through the middle of the Wall. The high point makes a perfect spot for lunch, with panoramic views of surrounding mountains and the Wall trailing off into the distance. We will use ropes at one difficult section on the way to the top tower, and then finish the hike in a quiet, little-known park.

Where: Huairou county, north of Beijing **When:** Sunday, pick up at 8 am at Lido Hotel, outside Starbucks **Cost:** 150 yuan (100 yuan for children under 12) **Tel:** 13910025516

Drifting Fun with High Club

Try a trek around Longtanjian, an area dotted with high mountains and steep cliffs in Huairou District. The path is

lined with historical relics, such as ancient plank roads built into cliff faces, stone jars and a horse-mounting stone believed to have been used by ancient female general Mu Guiying.

Where: Huairou county, north of Beijing **When:** Saturday, pick up at 8:30 am in front of Big Easy at the south gate of Chaoyang Park, Chaoyang **Cost:** 180 yuan, inclusive of transportation, English tour guide, main gate ticket, lunch and water **Tel:** 6553 2228

Sports



Play Football Now!

ClubFootball FC invites men, women and children in Beijing to come along and play football.

Players of all levels are welcome for play in and out of doors.

The club also offers midweek coaching sessions for adults to build their skills, all taught by FA-qualified coaching staff. To get playing, or for more information, email: play@wanguoqunxing.com. **Tel:** 6417 0495



Walk for Fun

The Beijing International Long Distance Walk Carnival kicks off at the Beijing Economic and Technology Development Zone Sunday at 7:30 am. This fun, free activity is open to people of all ages and fitness levels.

The route spans 21 kilometers and will have five checkpoints, where walkers can collect different colored ribbons to show they completed different

sections. Walkers that get all five ribbons will receive certificates of completion at the end of the event. This is a non-competitive, fun gathering of people interested in participation rather than winning.

There are no prizes, place standings, or medals to vie for. Interested people can call 8580 1241 ext. 4 for details, or sign up at any of China Life Insurance's 22 local offices.

Jams

The Big Easy

This local institution covers the musical bases, with life blues Wednesday to Saturday, techno on Sundays and Tuesdays and reggae on Monday nights.

Where: Chaoyang Park south gate, Chaoyang **Tel:** 6508 6776 **Metal Music**

Saturday night features bands Verse, PK14, Chun Qiu and Hol-low. Gu Cheng perform Sunday night.

Where: New Get Lucky, Dongfang Qicai Dashijie, in Laitai Flower Market **When:** Saturday and Sunday, 9:30 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 8448 3335

Performances

Ethnic Extravaganza

Over 130 artists from 20 ethnic groups from the China Central Minorities Song and Dance Ensemble will present the best songs and dances of their cultures. Directed by Ding Wei, the "Auspicious Clouds from Heaven to Earth" spectacular boasts a variety show supported with state-of-the-art stage settings and inspirational props. The settings will come to life with seemingly real mountain springs and man-made rain made from 250 kilograms of rice.

Where: Poly Theatre, Dongs Shitiao, Chaoyang **When:** September 9-12, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 120-880 yuan **Tel:** 6506 5345, 6506 5343

Canadian-Ukrainian Dance

The renowned Ukrainian Shumka Dancers of Alberta, Canada will stage their critically acclaimed production of *Cinderella*. Created under the artistic direction of Gordon Gordey, the company benefits enormously from the choreographic geniuses of Viktor Lytvynov from Ukraine and John Pichlyk from Canada.

Where: Beijing Exhibition Hall Theatre, Xizhimenwai Dajie, Xicheng **When:** September 10 and 11, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 120-520 yuan **Tel:** 6835 4455



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7 Tuesday	
XXX	10:30 pm
8 Wednesday	
Hysterical Blindness	10:00 pm
9 Thursday	
Head Over Heels	11:20 pm
CCTV-9	
Monday - Friday	
Around China	6:30 am
Cultural Express	8:30 am
Nature and Science / Chinese Civilization	11:30 am
Cultural Express	2:30 pm
Nature and Science / Chinese Civilization	5:30 pm
Dialogue	7:30 pm
News Updates / Asia Today	8 pm
Sports Scene	11:15 pm
Saturday	
Travelogue	9:30 am
Center Stage	11:30 am
Sunday	
Sports Weekend	10 am
Documentary	10:30 am
This Week	12:30 am
China Radio International 91.5 FM	
Monday - Friday	
Easy FM Afternoon	2-7 pm
Fun in Beijing	5-5:30 pm
Joy FM	9:05-11 pm
Saturday	
Music Memories	8:05-11 am
Euro Hit 40	12:05-1 pm
Music Sans Frontiers	6:05-8 pm
Joy FM	9:05-11 pm
Sunday	
Music Memories	8:05-11 am
Jazz Beat	6:05-8 pm
Joy FM	9:05-11 pm

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By Zhang Jianzhong

By Shida Zhu

Heyuan Garden (何园) is the biggest of all ancient gardens in Yangzhou, a city at the juncture of the Grand Canal and the Yangtze River. The garden faces the ancient canal, borrowing much of its beauty in the design of its landscaping.

It was built in 1883, the ninth year of the reign of Emperor Daoguang on the site of the previous Double Chinese Scholartree Garden. The owner was He Zhidao, governor of the prefecture, hence its name.

It is composed of living quarters and gardens in a perfect combination of Chinese and Western style. This was by no means unusual, as in the late 19th century, considering the good points of Western civilization and learning from the West was in vogue. The living quarters comprise three sections with a yard each. The mansion in the front yard is a hall made of *nanmu* wood and the two others in the second and third yard are two story buildings.

The roofs are covered with black tiles while the walls are made of terrazzo and are paneled with glass windows and *nanmu* shutters. Inside the house there are fireplaces, looking glasses inset in carved wooden frames and gliding doors, all made with exquisite craftsmanship. The two-story buildings are connected with the 400-meter-long covered round-the-garden corridors in extraordinary harmony.

The garden is separated naturally into the eastern and western parts by a covered corridor that rises and falls as the landscape does. In the eastern part, the "ship hall" is surrounded with a paving of pebbles and tiles in a rippling pattern that creates the illusion of waves. When the moon is full and shines on the pebbled patterns, it seems as if the house is a ship plying through water.

Northeast of the ship hall are rocky formations built against the backdrop of a wall. On top of the rocky hills is the Pavilion of the Moon facing east. In the southwest corner of the western part of the garden stands another Pavilion of the Moon facing west. People may appreciate the rising and setting of the moon from the two platforms.

The Pianshi Shanfang (片石山房), the Stone Hut Garden, in the southwest corner of the Heyuan Garden is the remains of a gardening masterpiece by Shi Tao (1642-1707), a monk and famous painter and designer of rock formations of the early Qing Dynasty. He was a descendant of the royal family of the toppled Ming court. Shi Tao designed a rock hill against a wall on the northern shore of Quchi Pond, which remains intact.

A poem by Shi Tao eulogizes the garden:

White clouds dim the ancient caves,
Listening to the cascading water;
at complete ease is my heart;
How many good books there are in the study,
Lo! A genuine fairy I'm here as a hermit.

There is another famous garden in Yangzhou, built by Huang Yingtai, president of the association of salt merchants south and north of the Huaihe River during the reign of Emperor Daoguang of the Qing Dynasty. It is called Geyuan Garden (个园).

In the center stands Yiyu Hall, with its four sides open to the garden. The main two-storied architecture is the Changlou in the north where guests were feted.

It is best known for its novel rock formations expressing the essence of the four seasons: spring, summer, autumn and winter. The rock hill of spring is planted with green bamboo, while the one of summer looks onto a pool where lotus flowers are in full bloom in summer. A zigzag bridge spans the pool and leads to a seemingly endless rock cave. One may climb the stone steps in the cave to a pavilion of exquisite grace that stands on the top of the hill.

A suspended corridor connects Changlou and the autumn hill of yellow rocks, the highest point of



Jixiao Shanzhuang in Heyuan Garden

Thanks to the Grand Canal extending north to the imperial city of Beijing, dug during the Sui Dynasty, northern Jiangsu Province has long been a cradle of refined art and architecture. Because of the wild and yet elegant fancies of those self-styled men of letters, officials and rich merchants, the salt merchants in particular, private gardens in all manner of fantasies, thrived there.



Geyuan Garden



Pianshi Shanfang in Heyuan Garden

Geyuan Garden
Photos by Imaginechina

the garden. On top of the hill is the Cloud Kissing Pavilion, where people climb on the ninth day of the ninth lunar month to celebrate the Double Ninth Festival of autumn and see the beautiful scenes in the Lean West Lake and the Mountain of Guanyin, the Goddess of Mercy, in the north. The hill of winter is a wall of white rocks produced in Xuancheng, Anhui. There are 24 holes in the upper part of the wall, and in winter, when the wind sweeps through these open windows, the whole structure howls.

Another garden, more related to water, lies in the northeast of Rugao (如皋), a town east of Yangzhou. The Shuihui Garden (水绘园), or Water Painting Garden, is crisscrossed with streams and is representative of Ming and Qing gardens with its scholarly taste and finesse of elegance.

It was built during the reign of the Emperor Wanli of the Ming Dynasty by Mao Yigui from a local noble family. His grandson, Mao Xiang (1611-1693), tired of politics, and decided to stay in his hometown without taking any official posts. He formed a society, the Fu She, with friends and criticized the political life of the day in private. He is known as one of the "four renowned gentlemen" of the late Ming period. Under his care, the garden became one of the best-known in northern Jiangsu. It covered

more than six hectares, with no wall, bounded only by an encircling brook.

Mao Xiang brought Dong Xiaowan (1624-1652), a geisha and a Suzhou beauty, to his home. Remarkably clever and beautiful, Dong was well versed in the embroidery, music, culinary and tea making arts.

Mao Xiang erected the Shuiming Hall, or Water Bright Hall on the pond, as a place for his sweetheart to apply her make-up. The hall is more than 40 meters long from north to south, fronted with a pavilion over the water, a living room in the middle and a penthouse in the rear, all connected with a zigzag corridor. Seen from afar, the layers upon layers of structures give the impression they continue without end, further evidence of the artistry of this master designer.

The garden fell into disrepair after Mao Xiang died. After 1949, Professor Chen Congzhou of Tsinghua University, a leading garden architect, presided over its renovation, restoring it to its former poetic beauty and glory.

Getting there: Return airfares from Beijing to Nanjing, the capital of Jiangsu Province range from 1,020, to 2,010 yuan. There are also direct trains from Beijing to Nanjing (10 and a half hours). From Nanjing, it is less than two hours by train or bus to Yangzhou.



Tonglicheng

Local Escapes



Mountains of Clouds

By Dong Nan

Wuling Mountain, rising 2,118 meters above sea level, is located in Miyun, northwest of Beijing. In summer and autumn, there are always seas of cloud and frost surrounding the tops of highest peaks.

The mountain is also well known for its 1,100 species of higher plants, among which are 178 species of wild flowers and 576 species of medicinal herbs. Its sheer cliffs and precipices, deep valleys, lingering clouds, springs and pools, Buddhist pagoda and inscriptions on the cliffs make it a popular weekend destination for Beijingers.

The four main sightseeing areas are Waitao Feng (Waitao Peak), special for clouds and flowers, Xianren Ta (Xianren Tower), special for strangely shaped stones, Long Tan (Dragon Pool), special for springs and waterfalls and Qingliang Jie (Cool Land), special for inscriptions and temples.

If you still have time, Simatai Great Wall lies just to the west of Wuling Mountain. Professor Luo Zhewen, a specialist of the Great Wall used to say: "The Great Wall is the best of ancient Chinese buildings, and Simatai is the best of the Great Wall."

Wuling Shanzhuang (Wuling Mountain Villa), a three-star hotel located between Wuling Shan and Simatai, is a good base for a weekend visit. It provides reasonably comfortable accommodation, bowling, swimming and, of course, karaoke, as well as a minibus service to the nearby scenic spots.

Be sure to take some warm clothing, as it can be quite cool on top of the mountain, even in summer.

Wuling Mountain Villa offers a two-day trip for around 500 yuan Tel: 8102 2489

Getting there: Take bus 980 from Dongzhimen Bus Station to Miyun, then a taxi to Wuling Shan (around 80 yuan). Alternatively, driving from Beijing: pass through Miyun Xiancheng, Taishitun, Songshuyi, go north and turn right, pass through Xinchengzi and Caojialu, go east to the north entrance.

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